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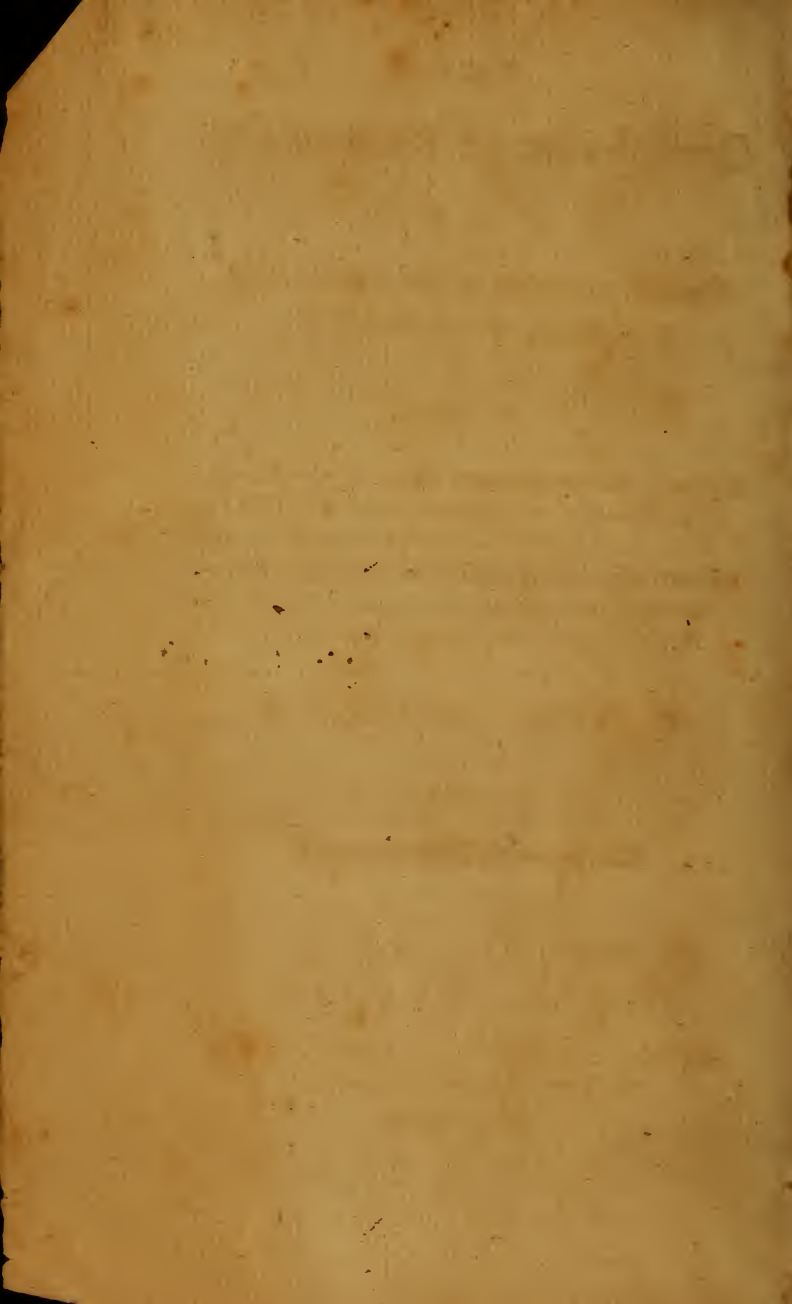
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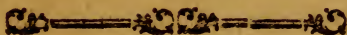
THE
Completion of PROPHECY,

THE
Clearest evidence of the TRUTH of
CHRISTIANITY;

O R,

A short, but perspicuous view of the RISE,
PROGRESS, and DECLINE of POPE-
RY, from its first APPEARANCE in the
WORLD, till its final EXTINCTION.

By JOHN LAWRIE, A. M.



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P R E F A C E.

AS the accomplishment of prophecy affords one of the clearest evidences of the truth of Christianity, it is hoped the following sheets will elucidate this matter in a concise, yet perspicuous manner.

If it can be made appear, that all the remarkable transactions with respect to the church, and her surrounding foes, for upwards of seventeen hundred years past, were as distinctly foretold, as if the prophetic writers had seen the accomplishment of them, and that these prophecies are fulfilling every day; this cannot fail to stop the mouths of Infidels, and confirm the faith of the true Christian. To point out the completion of scripture-prophecy concerning the Christian church, from the days of the apostles, to the end of the world, is the design of the present essay. A common objection to works of this kind is, that the prophecies, especially those of John's Revelation, are so obscure, and difficult to be understood, that nothing certain can be derived from them. But the objectors ought to remember, that we are commanded to *search the scriptures*, without any limitation to particular passages of it; and that *every scripture* is profitable for instruction,

&c. The same persons make no objections to those who dig into the bowels of the earth in quest of metals, which yet is a work of no small labour, difficulty and danger, as well as mere uncertainty. If, therefore, we may be allowed to make the comparison, they act wisely, who dig into the earth in hopes of an uncertain and transitory gain; how much more wisely must they act, who dig deep into the mines of scripture-truths, where they will *certainly* receive instruction, profitable not only for this life, but for that which is to come.

Perhaps the reader will expect in this preface, some more particular account of the contents of our essay. This we shall lay before him, in as few words as possible. It contains a brief account of the state of the church, her persecutions and trials; also the punishments inflicted upon her enemies, from the spreading of Christianity, to the end of the world. The diffusing the gospel through the world, and the rapid progress it made by the apostles, and their immediate successors, is typified by the opening of the first seal; the five following comprehend the church's persecutions by the Roman emperors, and the dreadful judgments inflicted upon them for persecuting her. The seventh seal ushers in the glorious reformation by Constantine the Great, and continues during the first six trumpets, when

when the church gradually apostatizes from the truth, and Antichrist makes his appearance. During which time, the Goths, Vandals, and other northern nations, and after them, the Saracens and Turks, pour in like a flood upon the Roman empire, and as a most grievous plague upon that apostate church: yet she repents not, till under the seventh trumpet, seven vials begin to be poured out upon her, which are continued one after another, till the fifth expel the pope from Rome, and the sixth utterly destroys him and his hierarchy for ever. Then follows the conversion of the Jews, and the glory of the latter-days, when the millennium shall commence in its full extent; which continues till the final consummation of all things under the seventh vial, which is to be poured out upon the enemies of Christ without exception.

This is a brief account of the following treatise. How far the author has succeeded, the impartial public will now be judge; from whose candour and generosity, he expects all possible indulgence to his well-meant attempt.

P R E F A C E,

By a FRIEND of the AUTHOR's.

IN this enlightened age, (as it is called), the subject of the following treatise will appear strange. But as Newton, Napier, and many other great men, have not thought it beneath them to go in the same path before him, the author thinks he needs not be ashamed of so good company. If he has presumed to differ from them, he does it with the greatest deference; and all their intentions, with respect to the whole, tend to the same point. Whoever believes the prophecies, will see the argument in its full force, and give proper allowances for the frailty of the author, on so nice and important a subject. To others, who treat every thing sacred with a degree of ridicule, there is no apology necessary. When Popery is making such strides, and is meeting with rather too much indulgence from the public, works of this kind cannot, among the sober-minded, be thought unseasonable.

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E R R A T A.

Page 30. Line 31. for 11. read XI. p. 31. l. 4. for 11. r. XI. p. 34 l. 3 for 557. read 757. p. 64. l. 17 for *prompt* read *prompted*. p. 112 l. 21 for *at* read *as*. p. 114 l. 24. for *other* read *another*. p. 131 l. 1A for 860 read 1860. p. 144. l. 38 for *ope* read *pope* p. 166 l. 9. for 125. read 1254. p. 193. line last, for *imita on* read *imitation*.

INTRODUCTION.

THE frequent remonstrances that have appeared in public, from time to time, in different parts of Great Britain, concerning the too great successful attempts of the priests, and other emissaries of the church of Rome, to pervert his Majesty's Protestant subjects to that communion; and the accounts that have been published since the Popish bill was in Scotland, as well as in many places both of England and Ireland; notwithstanding the care and attention of the reverend clergy in the three kingdoms, and the repeated acts of parliament that were formerly made to curb and check its growth, and, if possible, to banish it out of these realms.

Our misfortunes for some time past, seem to have been, that whilst we thought ourselves sufficiently secure from the open attempts of Popish emissaries, by the legal provisions that were made against them, our attention has been, unhappily diverted by that circumstance, from their more secret and insidious practices upon particular persons who have fallen in their way. Doubtless, we might have expected that they would have been restrained from these attempts, by a principle of gratitude for the lenity of our civil government, in conniving at their enjoyment of their own worship, while the priests should content themselves with ministering to such only as have been born of Popish parents, and educated in that communion.

But they who have entertained these expectations, could not, we believe, readily find an instance in all Europe, where Popery has been

A

satisfied

satisfied with a bare connivance on any consideration. Her claims and pretensions rise too high to be controuled by a principle of gratitude. A church which arrogates to herself all power in heaven and earth on the one hand, and whose very existence, on the other, depends upon the pompous and conspicuous exhibition of a Paganish ceremonial, will never submit to be confined to a corner; or acquiesce in any terms where her peculiar merit, visibility, is excluded from the advantages of parade and ostentation. As an evidence of the truth of this; in some cities, it is said, the Popish chapel is shewn to strangers, with all its splendid and superb decorations, as one of the curiosities of the place. And we have heard of one, where the door of the chapel is reported to stand open in the day-time to the street, from whence there is a prospect to the altar, &c.

If indeed scripture, reason, and common sense, were to have their full influence upon the hearts and understandings of all those who profess the Protestant religion, the claims and pretensions of Popery would be easily seen through, and universally despised; but while such numbers of the common people are so imperfectly instructed in the principles of their religion, that it may be questioned whether many of them can give any better account of them, than that they derived them from their parents; who can wonder, that such uninformed minds should be greatly over-matched by the subtlety and indefatigable perseverance of the bigotted agents of a church, which sets herself up for the mother and mistress of Christendom.

But in order to form a proper judgment of the spirit and influence of Popery, it will be necessary to look into the history of these countries where it is, and has been for ages past, the established

stablished religion. And here, besides the practice of the most abject superstition, and even of the grossest idolatry, we shall find, that whenever the civil powers have attempted to provide for the public welfare, by measures or expedients in any degree unfavourable to the peculiar interests of the church, means have always been found to break the peace of the community, by some one or other of these turbulent ecclesiastics, whom the mistaken zeal of former times hath nourished, by luxurious provisions and exclusive privileges, in a state of detachment from the body-politic; a set of men, who, whatever might be the original design of their respective founders, have not, for many ages, been of any other use worth the mentioning, than that of strengthening the iron-hand of Papal authority, and thereby preventing the civil magistrate, where-ever he was inclined to it, from lightening the galling yoke of ecclesiastical tyranny. And where the monkish orders are so numerous, and confessors, taken out of them, have so frequently had the consciences of sovereign princes under their direction, occasions and pretences could never be wanting to controul the most salutary counsels for public welfare, if they should interfere ever so little with the claims or prerogatives of the hierarchy.

The neighbouring kingdom of France hath perhaps made more vigorous efforts in opposition to the encroachments of the See of Rome, than any Popish state in Europe; and there are instances in the French histories, where these efforts have not been altogether without success. But the same histories inform us, that any advantage of this kind gained over the church, have, for the most part, been either dearly purchased, or of no long continuance; and, generally speaking, whatever abatement of the Papal power have ob-

tained in any states and kingdoms, which did not absolutely cast it off, the sovereign Pontiff, having the religious orders entirely under his direction, and at his devotion, hath found the means to balance, by obtaining ample concessions in other articles. And where he hath not succeeded by way of compromise, he hath seldom failed, by the means of some trusty agents, to take severe vengeance, sooner or latter, on those who stood in his way. In order to confirm the truth of this assertion, consult the history of France under the princes of the house of Guise, Henry the III. and IV. Lewis the XIII. and XIV.

Such being the malignant effects which Popish principles have upon civil government, even in the hands of arbitrary monarchs, who might be supposed to have the most immediate means of controuling their exorbitant claims and pretensions, it behoves us to consider what might be the consequence of its gaining an establishment in a state, whose constitution is founded upon the most generous principles of public liberty, the very idea of which must be totally extinguished, before way can be made for the very lowest of its usurpations.

Our reforming forefathers were perfectly sensible of this, and were proportionably thankful for their deliverance from so destructive a superstition. We of this generation, who contemplate Popery only in historical narrative, or in the twilight of a partial practice, have but a faint and obscure notion of their joy and transport upon its expulsion from this land of liberty; when they found themselves set free from the tyranny of the bishop of Rome, and all his detestable enormities. Shall Britain, famed for civil and religious liberty over the whole world, once more stoop, once more bend her neck under the galling yoke of Popish tyranny, and Antichristian

tichristian delusions? Forbid it, Heaven! forbid it, ye sensible and learned people! who have long lived so happy under a race of Protestant princes, whose names will be handed down to posterity, with the highest honour. Consider the many horrid plots and machinations of wicked Papists, against the lives of our glorious Protestant sovereigns. Can a religion be of God, which authorizes and countenances such enormities? can any confidence be put in men, who think they do God good service by murdering those who differ from them in religious principles?

How necessary then are penal laws to secure the Protestant settlement of the crown of Great Britain, and, by consequence, the rights and liberties of British subjects, against the effects of principles so destructive of our happy constitution. And it is to little purpose to complain of their severity, when we have so often experienced, that, even that severity hath not been sufficient to discourage the attempts of the Popish party, whenever they had a prospect of succeeding, in bringing about the ruin of our religion and liberties; and when we consider, that, in all human probability, nothing but this very severity of the penal laws has prevented them from succeeding. To tolerate men with such principles, and with no more restraint than is laid upon Protestant dissenters, (whose principles and affections are well known to be friendly to the civil and religious rights of mankind in general, and our own government in particular), would be to nourish in our own bosom a nest of vipers, prepared to subvert our constitution, whenever an opportunity should offer, which they could hardly want a year to an end, were they to obtain a full toleration, which they have been long and ardently wishing for; and now seem to be in a fair way to obtain.

But it is said, If you exclude them from toleration, merely on account of their political doctrines, why do you molest them in their religious worship, shut up their mass-houses, and prosecute their priests, who are merely ecclesiastical officers?

To this we reply, Whenever the Papists will openly and candidly disavow those political principles, which render them obnoxious to our civil government, we shall then be able to distinguish between those principles, and their religious opinions. In the present state of Popery, both sorts of doctrine are so intimately incorporated with each other, as not to admit of any separation, till they shall think fit to make it themselves. In the mean time every Papist, of course, is an enemy to the British constitution; and the guardians of that constitution have no way of knowing who is, or is not a Papist, but by his practising Popish rites and devotions.

Also the priests of that communion are known, by the authentic forms which invest them with their function, to be more especially bound to an implicit obedience to a foreign and inimical jurisdiction, with an express exclusion of all subjection to a heretical government: a Popish priest is accordingly known to be an enemy to our government, by the same tokens that discover him to be a priest. And hence it is, that his saying or singing mass, brings him within the reach of the penal laws, without further evidence.

These, and many other considerations that might be mentioned, naturally suggest to the clergy of the Protestant persuasion, what is their duty, in respect to their vigilance, over those who are more immediately under their inspection, in a religious light. Principles of rebellion, are not, we are certain, the principles of Christianity; and every thing of that sort, which is taught un-
der

der the name of religion, must have the worst effects upon the dispositions and manners of those who learn and espouse them; as they implant in their minds a persuasion, that they are doing God service by such practices, as they might see, if they were permitted to consult the word of God, that they are an abomination to him.

If ever there was a time for the ministers of the everlasting gospel to exert themselves in the cause of truth, it is surely the present; especially the Protestant clergy of England and Ireland, where shoals of Popish vermin abound. It is their duty to lay before their people, the pernicious consequence of Popish doctrines, both on account of their present mischief to human society, and their tendency to defeat the future happiness of every individual, who is corrupted by them. Every convert to Popery is a double loss. He is lost, in the first place, to the glorious liberty of the sons of God, and becomes a slave to a base and sordid superstition, which exercises an imperious tyranny over his conscience, and fetters him once more in that bondage and darkness, from which the light of the gospel was intended to set him free. He is lost, in the next place, as an affectionate and obedient subject, to a most gracious king, and a most eligible constitution of government, and enlists himself in a pernicious confederacy, to subvert the rights and liberties which depend upon them.

The proper business of the clergy is, to labour in word and doctrine, privately to instruct and catechise their flocks in the great fundamental points of the Christian religion; and, at the same time, narrowly watch over the education of youth; in the different seminaries of learning under their care, that their tender minds be not poisoned with the external glare of Heathenish theology, which is an easy introduction to Popery; but that

that their masters be at the utmost pains to initiate them in the principles of our holy religion. — Will not the assiduity and unwearied application of Jesuits, and Popish missionaries, rouse faithful ministers to be as careful and diligent to save souls, as they are to destroy them?

It has been asserted, and upon no weak presumption, that if there should be a man of common sense so circumstanced, as to have no other way of coming at a complete view of the design and tendency of the gospel of Christ, he might have it very sufficiently, by putting down a list of doctrines, the reverse of those taught by the church of Rome, and particularly those upon which she builds her exclusive authority. And, indeed, no great wonder: for a religion, where idolatry is practised and encouraged in so many gross instances, and whose aim and end is to establish an arbitrary dominion over the human mind, for so many lucrative and sensual purposes, could but maintain its reputation for a very little while, without these slavish traditions of the Pharisaical kind, and the superstitious pageantry of Paganism; which our blessed Lord condemned, and came on earth to abolish.

As Papists now deny every thing that makes against them, we shall favour our readers with the substance of a letter, wrote by Pope Clement II. to Charles VI. emperor of Germany, dated June 4. 1712. Seeing it has been often denied, that the doctrine of the council of Constance, *viz.* that faith is not to be kept with heretics, and particularly when the interest of the church comes in question, is not the doctrine of the church of Rome, it has been thought expedient to subjoin the decision of a pope, near three hundred years after the said council was held, and that with respect to the most solemn treaties made between sovereign princes. But his holiness

ness having made mention, in this letter, of four treaties in which the interests of the church were concerned, namely, the treaties of Westphalia, Ryswick, Alt-Ranstadt, and Utrecht, it will be necessary, that we may better understand the pope's doctrine, to give a short account of each of these treaties, so far as relates to the stipulations in them concerning religion.

By the peace of Westphalia, negotiated at Munster and Osnaburg in 1648, it was stipulated, that those of the confession of Augsburg, who have been in the possession of churches, and, among others, the burghers and inhabitants of Oppenheim, shall be maintained in the ecclesiastical state of the year 1620 ; and that others, who are desirous of embracing the same exercise of the confession of Augsburg, shall be at liberty to practise it, in public as well as in private, &c.

It is to be observed, that the articles of this treaty have been considered as fundamental laws and constitutions, which serve as a basis to all subsequent treaties.

Nevertheless, the pope then reigning took care to publish a bull, annulling all the articles of this treaty, which he conceived prejudicial to the Roman catholic religion ; and consequently, to dispense with the Roman-catholic powers, who were parties in it, from fulfilling their engagements with the Protestants.

About the end of the year 1697, the peace of Ryswick was ratified. During the negotiations at Ryswick, the ambassadors of the Protestant princes delivered a memorial to the mediator, demanding, that in Strasburg, and all other cities of Alsace to be ceded to France, the Lutheran religion should be tolerated, and enjoy all the rights and privileges secured by the treaty of Westphalia. The French, desiring some time to answer, in concert with the imperial plenipotentiaries,

tiaries, neglected this representation, and inserted in the treaty that the Roman catholic religion, in the places to be delivered up, should remain in the same state it was at that time. Thus, no notice being taken of the Protestants, several churches were left to the Papists, which, according to the laws of the empire, and the preliminaries of the treaty, ought to have been taken from them, and restored to Protestants. The ministers of the electors, and other Protestant princes, refused to sign the treaty till this clause was altered, and published a memorial justifying their refusal, and shewing that this article of the treaty was contrary to the laws of the empire, the peace of religion, and the treaty of Westphalia.

By the treaty of Alt-Ranstadt, 1707, it was stipulated, that the king of Sweden (Charles XII.), and the king elector Augustus, as members of the Germanic body, should act jointly for the conservation of religion, as established by the treaties of Munster and Osnaburg, (Westphalia), that no change of religion should be admitted in Saxony or Lusatia; and that the Roman Catholics should be denied churches, schools, academies, colleges, and monasteries, within these several districts.

But Augustus' good fortune having restored him to the throne of Poland, all that had been covenanted at Alt-Ranstadt was overturned, but not without some scruples, both in the king and people. Augustus had been bred in the Protestant religion, where the strict obligation of oaths and covenants, and the iniquity of breaking them, is taught agreeable to the scriptures: he could not therefore be without some degree of compunction, in so totally violating all the solemn engagements he had entered into at Alt-Ranstadt. He had learned, however, from his
new

new religion, that the peace of the church effectually healed all breaches of this kind. Application was therefore made to the court of Rome, to release the king from the obligations contracted by the treaty of Alt-Ranstadt. A few of the more tender consciences might be hurt, with seeing him reassume, without scruple, that diadem which he had solemnly renounced, and confirmed, by the most sacred obligations, to another: the pontiff's absolving power would apply remedies, neither to be found in policy nor human reason. The nuncio granted the absolution required; and all good catholics were then unanimous, that the oaths taken by Augustus were of no signification.

In the twenty-first article of the treaty of Utrecht, the French king stipulates with the queen of Great Britain, that he will, in friendship to the queen, grant, in his treaty with the empire, all things concerning religion to be settled according to the treaties of Westphalia.

This, we may be sure, alarmed his holiness sufficiently, and was the immediate occasion of the following address to the emperor Charles VI.

“ To our most beloved son in Christ, Charles,
 “ the catholic king of the Spains, the illustrious king of Hungary and Bohemia, elected to be emperor of the Romans, Clement
 “ II. pope.

“ Our dear son in Christ, health, and apostolical benediction.

“ The many and zealous endeavours, which
 “ we know to be incessantly exerted by heterodox
 “ princes, in the treaties opened at Utrecht, that
 “ whatsoever was added to the fourth article of
 “ the pacification of Ryfwick, in favour of the catholics, and of the orthodox faith, should be
 “ wholly abrogated; and that, on the contrary,
 “ the

“ the heads of the peace of Westphalia, relating
 “ to the affair of religion, which were not for-
 “ merly condemned by this holy see, but like-
 “ wise corrected by the said fourth article
 “ of Ryswick, should be reinstated and carried
 “ into execution, (concerning which we lately
 “ wrote to your majesty at large), recal to our me-
 “ mory these unhappy, and never-enough to be
 “ lamented covenants, which plainly, with the
 “ same design, of bringing the abomination into
 “ the holy place, the plenipotentiaries or com-
 “ missaries of Sweden, no less violently than un-
 “ justly, extorted from the plenipotentiaries of
 “ commissaries of your brother, the late empe-
 “ ror, of famous memory; and which were en-
 “ tered into by the said commissaries, on each
 “ part, in the year 1707, in the camp at Alt-
 “ Ranstadt. The great grief with which we were
 “ then affected, when we considered with our-
 “ selves, that, besides other most grievous de-
 “ triments brought upon the catholic religion,
 “ and the ecclesiastic jurisdictions, by those co-
 “ venants, so remarkable a number of churches,
 “ as well in the three duchies of Lignitz, Berg,
 “ and Munsterberg, as in the city of Wratisslaw,
 “ and in the other principalities of Silesia, should
 “ be torn off, and taken away from the true
 “ worship of God, and delivered up and assign-
 “ ed to the impiety of an execrable sect, is now
 “ chieflly not only renewed, but in a great mea-
 “ sure augmented, and become more intense,
 “ while we reflect and foresee how great hope
 “ the heretics will derive from thence, of per-
 “ fecting the rest of their wicked machinations
 “ and counsels. Moreover, although we are
 “ certain that it is no secret to your majesty,
 “ how averse your said brother was to the cov-
 “ nants above mentioned; how greatly he grie-
 “ ved, that, because of the difficulties in which
 “ his

his affairs were involved, he was obliged to accept of those hard and plainly impious conditions, and how earnestly he desired to repair and make good, by proper remedies, whatsoever had been corruptly transacted: all which he he expressly signified to us, by letters written with his own hand; and still more amply and clearly explained, more than once, to our beloved son Anibal, cardinal of Albano, of the holy Roman church, our nephew by the father's side according to the flesh, then residing with him as our agent. And although we can by no means doubt but that your majesty, from your eminent piety, and the affection which you bear to the cause of God and his church, perfectly understands and acknowledges that such covenants have been and are wholly void, and in their own nature of no force or effect, as your brother, being admonished by us, openly acknowledged and confessed, and on that account also fully perceives, that no regard ought to be paid to them, and that they neither can nor ought to be alledged or observed by any person, or in any manner whatsoever; yet, as well that it may more plainly appear to your majesty, what always has been, and still is our judgment in that matter, as that your majesty, being more substantially supported by our apostolical decision, may, with more alacrity, utterly despise the before-mentioned conventions, and esteem them as if they had never been made; We, by these presents, denounce to your majesty, and at the same time, by the authority committed to us by the most omnipotent God, declare the before-mentioned covenants of the treaty of Alt-Ranstadt, and every thing contained in it, which are in any ways obstructive of, or hurtful to, or which may be said, esteemed, pretended, or

B

understood

* understood to occasion or bring, or to have
 “ brought, the least prejudice to, or any wise to
 “ hurt the catholic faith, divine worship, the sal-
 “ vation of souls, the authority, jurisdiction, or
 “ any rights of the church whatsoever, together
 “ with all and singular matters which have fol-
 “ lowed, or may at any time hereafter follow
 “ from them, to be, to have been, and perpet-
 “ ually to remain hereafter, *de jure* null, vain,
 “ invalid, unjust, reprobated, void, and evacu-
 “ ated of all force and effect from the beginning,
 “ and that no person is bound to the observation of
 “ them, nor any of them, although the same have
 “ been repeatedly ratified or secured by an oath;
 “ and that they neither could nor ought to have
 “ been, nor can or ought to be observed by any
 “ person whatsoever; and that no right, action,
 “ title, colour of title, cause of possession or pre-
 “ scription, is or hath been acquired from them,
 “ much less may be acquired or accrue by any
 “ length of time; and that they create or have
 “ created no estate or quality, but that they ought
 “ for ever to be accounted as if they had never
 “ issued, and as if they were not extant, nor had
 “ ever been made. And nevertheless, for the
 “ greater caution, and so far as may be necessa-
 “ ry, we disapprove, rescind, annul, make void,
 “ annul, and totally discharge of all force and
 “ effect, all the foresaid covenants, and all other
 “ the premisses enumerated in these presents,
 “ which are prejudicial as aforesaid. Where-
 “ fore, our most dear son in Christ, attend, and
 “ wholly rejecting all covenants of this kind, and
 “ rescinding every thing which has, in any man-
 “ ner, been done towards the execution of
 “ them, valiantly defend the cause of the church,
 “ of religion, and of God; and from that pa-
 “ tronage, take the omen of a happy beginning
 “ of the government you have undertaken: make
 “ it

“ it appear that you are thoroughly persuaded,
 “ that the chief part you have to act, agreeably
 “ to the majesty of the empire to which you are
 “ elevated, consists in strenuously maintaining
 “ the rights of the faith and of the church,
 “ which the most renowned emperors, your an-
 “ cestors, studied to assert and amplify with all
 “ their might ; so will you derive upon your
 “ name everlasting praise and glory, and secure
 “ to yourself, and your august house, the blessings
 “ of heaven more and more ; as an earnest of
 “ which, we most lovingly impart to your majesty
 “ our apostolical benediction, accompanied with
 “ a perpetual prayer for your felicity. Given at
 “ St Peter’s, in Rome, under the ring of the
 “ Fisherman, the 4th day of June 1712, and in
 “ the 12th year of our pontificate.”

It appears by this letter, that, from the time
 of the council of Constance to the year 1712, it
 was the constant and invariable doctrine of the
 church of Rome, that all stipulations with Pro-
 testants concerning church-matters, that is to
 say, which granted any religious advantages to
 the Protestants, or withdrew any from the Pa-
 pists, were to be considered by the good catholics
 as *ipso jure* null, and invalid from the beginning.

If the pope does not belie the emperor Joseph,
 his imperial majesty was exactly of the same sen-
 timents with his holiness concerning the treaty
 of Alt-Ranstadt. He looked upon those articles,
 which gave up so many churches to the Pro-
 testants, as of no validity ; but the necessity of his
 affairs requiring his present compliance, he could
 only lament his hard fate to cardinal Anibal, and
 express his desire of finding proper remedies, to
 patch up the breaches thus made in the jurisdic-
 tion of holy church. When Augustus reassumed
 the Polish sceptre, the emperor’s sorrows were

assuaged of course. Whether he found the same spiritual remedy which was applied to the conscience of Augustus, or no, for deserting his guarantee, and for infringing so much of the treaty as more immediately belonged to himself, his holiness does not mention. His contrition, however, we may suppose, entitled him to the peace of the church of course, and so far, we may conclude, he died in odour of sanctity.

Charles VI. his successor, by not acceding to the treaty of Utrecht, avoided the temptation of incurring the sad effects of his holiness's denunciation. By what had passed at Utrecht, Lewis XIV. only was bound to see that the treaty of Westphalia should be confirmed in his treaty with the empire. At the treaty of Rastadt, in the 1714, Lewis had the opportunity of performing, what his friendship for the queen of Great Britain had induced him to promise at Utrecht; but in the accounts I have seen of that pacification, there is no mention made of the treaty of Westphalia: and as the emperor stipulated at Rastadt, that the king of France should execute the treaty of Ryswick, it is likely that his most Christian majesty's zeal for the church took the lead, on that occasion, of his complaisance for the queen of Great Britain. And indeed, if what another historian relates is true, the remonstrances of her majesty's minister at the Hague, concerning the fourth article of the treaty of Ryswick, which should have been modified at Rastadt, by substituting the stipulations of Westphalia, had no manner of regard paid to them.

The Roman catholics will now be pleased to inform us, at what period, since 1714, the Roman pontiff, or the states of Europe in communion with him, have either disowned the doctrines and maxims above mentioned; or corrected their practice by others of a more creditable family.

nily. If this cannot be shown, we shall hardly believe that the good faith of the individuals of that communion, where the interests of their church come in question, is secured to the Protestants upon any better grounds than a temporary dispensation; which will last no longer than the church remains in a state of inability to assert her authority, and reclaim her omnipotence. See Blackbourne's considerations on Popery, &c.

But what occasion have we to ransack the histories of former times, to illustrate and prove this point. Suppose the pope never issued such bulls, that no faith ought to be kept with heretics, or that the popes were now of a different opinion from their predecessors; how can his holiness, without publicly remonstrating against it, suffer the two elder sons of the church, I mean France and Spain, at present to break through the faith of treaties, and the most solemn covenants, sworn to at the last peace. Had Britain, or any other Protestant prince or state, behaved in the same manner they have done, all the courts of Europe would have resounded with loud and bitter complaints of Protestant perfidy. — But it seems a Roman catholic has an inherent right to break through all laws human and divine; because, forsooth, their pope is infallible; and because he has exalted himself above all that is called God: by which means he claims a power to alter and change, and otherwise modify, whatever God has revealed; that, if he should call black white, or right wrong, he must be believed.

It is lamentable to perceive what rapid progress Popery has lately made in these realms, particularly in England and Ireland, and in the north of Scotland! What shoals of Jesuits, and other Popish missionaries, have come over of late years! In a letter from Dublin wrote some years ago, the writer observes, That, attending the

Judges, at a sea-port town in the west of Ireland, he saw eight Jesuits and four priests, with eleven pupils, arrive from Nantes in France. What numbers of them swarm in every part of the kingdom; particularly, in those where ignorance most prevails: there their work is easiest, and there they are sure of success.

We shall further add a note of Mr Blackbourn: "The effects of Popish bigotry, says he, among our common people, is an evil of a very pernicious tendency, and by no means sufficiently attended to, because perhaps not generally understood. Some of the Roman catholics affect, in promiscuous company, to laugh at the influence the Protestants suppose their priests have upon them, and to treat this as a mere chimera. There are doubtless profligates and libertines, who pay no regard to religion, among the Papists, as well as among the Protestants. I speak not of these; but others, who will join with the gayest company, in all the fashionable dissipations of the times, even to the very borders of libertinism, for which the Protestant religion affords no atonement; but a serious and effectual repentance, and total conversion; and yet, in the midst of all this, are as diligent and punctual in their attendance upon the minutest formalities, such as going to confession, keeping fasts and festivals, repeating their devotions, &c. as the most superstitious Papists in the kingdom; and what is more, as zealous and assiduous in making converts (where that can be managed without observation), as the priests themselves. The Roman catholics are taught, and are ready to teach others, that whatever liberties they take of this kind are atoned for by having recourse to the peace of the church; and that all offences are blotted out through absolution, which, they know well enough, cannot be had without paying due deference to the dispensers

fers of it. Bigotry, among Papists of the lower ranks, is more open and without disguise. Their zeal, unqualified with the artifices of a polite education, will not permit them to conceal the implicit faith they have in their priests, or to baulk themselves, in delivering the plain doctrines they learn from them, (even the most absurd in religion, and sometimes the most treasonable in politics), when in disputation with Protestants. What effect the open avowal of such principles must have upon the lower class of Protestants, many of whom have neither been properly instructed, nor are of sufficient capacity to cope with the subtlety of a Popish priest, may easily be conjectured. They who become proselytes to Popery learn disaffection to Protestant government, and the Protestant religion, by the same set of maxims; and even, it is to be feared, to undervalue the most solemn bonds of civil society, when the interests of the church come in competition with them. Many are the instances of this kind that might be brought, of the pernicious influence of Popish bigotry upon the common people at this very period. It hath been often observed how remarkably useful the zeal and spirit of their female devotees have been to the Popish priests, in their grand business of proselyting. At the beginning of the reformation, the desertion of so many monks afforded matter of much pleasantry to the Popish writers, upon the supposition, that the chief motive of their conversion was the liberty of entering into the married state; and I remember, that, among other invidious reasons given by the Jesuits, for the conversion of the late Mr Bower, one was, that he was tired of lying alone. It seems however that the Papists, now that it will serve their own turn, have no objection to this matrimonial expedient of making converts. An honest plain country-

man

man might be too phlegmatic to be wrought upon by an ingenious quibble, or too penetrating to be ensnared by a piece of Jesuitical reasoning, who could not perhaps resist the temptation of a wife with a decent fortune, provided by his converters. Marriage has lately been the never-failing bait to many Protestants, both men and women, to give up the religion of their Bibles, for the idolatrous worship of the man of sin. In most cases, the conversion has been made a previous condition: but where the Protestant man or woman have been backward, the good work has been left to be perfected by the catholic husband or wife; who have seldom failed to accomplish it, by methods suggested to them by the directors of their consciences. Sometimes, indeed, all expedients have failed, and the Protestant mate hath held fast his or her integrity, in spite of all the cajolings or menaces employed to seduce them. This firmness, however, hath brought upon such, particularly the poor women, a variety of ill usage; which, in one late instance, I am about to transcribe from the Gentleman's magazine for April 1766, ended fatally. "On Saturday the fifth of April 1766, William Whittle, condemned at Lancaster-assizes, for the murder of his wife and two children, was executed on Lancaster-moor; and his body hung in chains. He was a Roman catholic, and confessed the fact. He was asked the motive for committing so horrid a crime? he said, His priest told him, he should be damned for marrying an heretic. —Why murder two innocent children? his answer was, The mother had carried them to church, so they would have been damned if he had not killed them; but now, he said, they were in purgatory, and would go to heaven in due time. On this fellow's being hung up, the Rev. Mr Leigh, curate of Lancaster — (whose

“ (whose good offices, however, Whittle reject-
 “ ed, calling out for a priest of his own sort),
 “ received the following letter: Sir, I make
 “ bold to acquaint you, that your house, and
 “ every clergyman’s that is in the town, (of
 “ Preston, near which the shocking fact was
 “ committed, and the criminal gibetted), or any
 “ black son of a b—h like you; for you are no-
 “ thing but heretics and damned souls. If Wil-
 “ liam Whittle, that worthy man, hangs up ten
 “ days, you may fully expect to be blown to
 “ damnation. I have nothing more material;
 “ but I desire you will make interest for him to
 “ be cut down, or else you may fully expect it
 “ at ten days end.”

If the Popish religion gives no countenance to
 such doctrines as are alledged against them, why
 do they not, by some public act, disavow their
 approbation of them? why do they leave sus-
 picions upon themselves and their religion by
 their silence, when such occasions call upon them
 so pressingly to explain themselves; and particu-
 larly, when they have been complaining of the
 severity of the penal laws, for which, surely,
 there is no room, if such are the principles of
 Papists in general?

It hath been often wished, that the legislature
 would take this affair of Protestants intermarry-
 ing with Papists, into their serious consideration.
 That the papists gain great advantages over the
 Protestants by these intermarriages, in point of
 conversions, is notorious. By which means,
 there is a sort of influence thrown into the hands
 of Popish priests, too indelicate to be mentioned
 here. If the Protestant settlement of the crown
 is of any consequence to the happiness of Great
 Britain, the methods taken by its internal ene-
 mies to undermine it, even in the minutest in-
 stance,

stance, ought not to be matters of indifference to the guardians of the public welfare.

The British government have been very jealous of putting arms into the hands of the Scotch nation, nay, even at a time when every man ought to have been armed in defence of every thing that is dear to him. But it were to be wished, they were as jealous of bigotted Papists, who have always been the worst of rebels to our Protestant government. Were we to recount all the insurrections raised by Papists in former reigns, it would swell our essay to an enormous bulk; we shall only make some remarks on the rioters in Ireland called White-boys. These were papists, and the violence broke out in time of war. As Papists, they were hurried on with a blind religious zeal, and that they were ripe for a rebellion, if an opportunity had offered. Had France at that time been able to have sent over some regular troops, it is more than probable we would have heard of another massacre, similar to that of the 1641. From the lord-lieutenant's speech to the Irish parliament, it is pretty evident that these rioters were ripe for a rebellion: "No means," says he, "can serve more effectually to prevent these disorders for the future, than the encouragement of such institutions, as tend to impress on the minds of the lower order of people, early habits of industry, and the principles of religion: for this purpose your Protestant charter-schools were erected; to which I therefore recommend the continuance of your care, encouragement, and support." This, we suppose, is decisive, and sufficient to shew, in what degree false principles of religion, (which, by the way, are not peculiar to the lower order of people only), were understood by the government, to contribute to these disorders.

Among the many objections to Popery, there
is

is none more striking to a reasonable, ingenious mind, than the MEANNESS which runs through all its peculiar doctrines and superstitions. One can hardly open any of their rituals, without being put in mind of Paul's beggarly elements, Gal. iv. 9. which all the pomp and parade of their ceremonies cannot disguise; and, as a certain judicious writer of our own country observes; "The rabble do usually cast their eyes upon, as children do on the lord mayor's pageants; admiring the splendor of those that ride in them." For who knows not that the magnificent implements, utensils, and ornaments, in use in the Roman church, have been collected by the contributions, partly of ignorant and superstitious zealots, and partly of dying men and women, terrified or allured, by the doctrines of purgatory and indulgences, to purchase their future peace at the hands of designing priests; who are base and abject enough, to enrich their churches and fraternities, sometimes, by reducing poor widows and orphans, who should have inherited these donations, to extremest distress and misery. What can be meaner than the practices of their begging friars, who, as Dr Middleton observes, "are always about the streets, and never fail to carry home a good sack-full of provisions, for the use of their convent." Letter from Rome, 8vo, 1741, page 220.

This trade is copied, as the doctor remarks, from their predecessors, the priests of Paganism: but as the same writer informs us, Cicero, in his book of laws, restrains this custom of begging or gathering alms, to one particular order of priests, (of Cybele), and that on certain days; because, as he says, it propagates superstition, and impoverishes families. Which, by the way, may let us see the policy (and I add, therein the superlative meanness) of the church of Rome,

In the great care they have taken to multiply their begging orders. The meanness of Popery, is indeed the principal idea which this letter from Rome exhibits, from beginning to end. It is impossible for a reader of it, to consider the Roman clergy in any higher character, than that of jugglers shewing their tricks for money; with this infamous difference on the part of the priests; that, under the mask of religion, they would make all their impostures pass for realities, and thereby incur the guilt of numerous and substantial evils introduced into society; of which the honestest, and oftentimes the more dexterous Charlatan stands acquitted. It is certain, that many of the more liberal and generous of that communion, have been scandalized at some of these contemptible practices, and have occasionally expressed their disgust: but still, it seems, it is thought necessary to continue them; upon the pitiful pretence, that, without such circumstances, religion would make very slender impressions on the minds of the people; which, indeed, is likely enough to be true, considering with what industry the poor people are kept in ignorance, that religious impressions may not be made upon them by any better means. But the truth is, these impositions are far more necessary for the priests themselves: the management of them is the craft by which they have their wealth; and to preserve that, nothing so mean, or childish, or ridiculous, or knavish, which may not be attempted. Dr Middleton observes, that father Mabillon, a learned Frenchman, and a priest, had never seen the ceremony of sprinkling beasts of labour with holy water, upon a certain annual festival; when all the inhabitants of the city (Rome) and neighbourhood, send up their horses, asses, &c. to the convent of St Anthony, where a priest, in a surplice, at the church-door, sprinkles

sprinkles, with his brush, all the animals singly, as they are presented to him, and receives, from each owner, a gratuity proportionable to his zeal and abilities: Mabillon was surprized at this ceremony, as well as many other parts of their worship, which he had never seen till he travelled into Italy. " But, says the Doctor, if these men of learning, and teachers of religion, know so little of what is done at Rome, how easy must it be to impose upon the poor catholics of Britain, and keep them in the dark, as to the exceptionable parts of their worship; which are openly avowed and practised abroad, to the scandal of all the candid and moderate of their own communion." Nothing surely can be more base and unmanly, than to keep our fellow creatures in ignorance, that we may, with the more facility, make a sordid gain of them. It is the meanness of a common cheat, and for which an ordinary tradesman would lose his reputation; and a practice, which, in a pretended teacher of religion, deserves a worse punishment than the pillory. But it must be owned, the lay Papists of Britain are not much less mean than the priests themselves, in submitting to be choused by such conjuring work; especially, in a country where they may make a fair examination, without standing in awe of the thunder of the Vatican, or the familiars of an holy office. The indignities to which some of our Roman catholics, not of the lowest kind, are often obliged to submit, in deference to an insolent imperious priest, cannot, with all their caution, be so concealed, but that they will occasionally transpire. And what wonder? In the papers of Shelden, a superior of the Jesuits, seized in November 1745, are proofs of commands being obeyed; when gentlemen of the first rank, and their chaplains, have been both averse to separation. None are allowed to chuse their own priests,

nor to retain them any longer than is agreeable to the superior. What meanness in a free born Briton! See a remarkable instance of the tyranny, exercised by the superior ecclesiastics over the inferior Popish clergy, in a very interesting address to their Graces the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, &c. just published, printed by Becket and De Hondt. p. 12. 13. See Mr Blackbourne's considerations on toleration.

SAINT JOHN,

IN THE

ISLE OF PATMOS.

Whoever will be at pains to consult the sacred oracles, he will clearly perceive that Antichrist is foretold, and distinctly pointed out in them; as we may see in Paul's second epistle to the Thessalonians, in the Apocalypse of John, and the prophecy of Daniel.

Here it will be necessary for us to premise a few things, in order to handle this important subject with greater precision.

God, in his great condescension to the human race, hath, in all ages, revealed to his church things that were to happen; that she might be comforted, her faith in his promises the more established, and infidels the more confounded and inexcusable.

According to the opinion of the best commentators, the Apocalypse contains a clear and distinct account, of all the remarkable events that were to befall the church, from the beginning of Christianity to the end of the world. This book may then be divided into three distinct periods; the first comprehending the persecutions of the church under the Heathen emperors, typified by seven seals in chap. v. The persecutions continue during the opening of the first six, and the seventh opens in the trumpets, chap. viii. 9.; which contain the churches trials and troubles, by in-

testine enemies, and Antichrist's errors gradually encreasing till he arrived at his height.

Then follow the seven vials, which are poured out on Antichrist and his followers. Here let it be observed, that every one of the seals, trumpets, and vials, are linked together, and connected with each other; so that the last seems to usher in a new period: for the seventh seal introduceth the trumpets, the seventh trumpet ushers in the vials; again the seventh vial seems to comprehend an interval, after the beast's destruction, to the end of time. So that, observing the principal prophecies in themselves, there are but three periods of the militant church; but as the seventh vial has something new in it, and entirely different from the former, therefore we may reckon four. The first period was under the Heathen persecutors, when the church was most-ly in a suffering condition; this is comprehended under the seals. The second was under the trumpets, when she was torn and wasted under heretics and Antichrist. The third is continued under the first six vials, when Antichrist is gradually decreasing, and the church gaining ground; she is represented, however, in a wrestling and fighting condition. The fourth and last period, which appears to be the shortest, because it has no distinct types accompanying it, as the former; but during it, the church is to enjoy much more uninterrupted quiet and repose, after the Turk and Antichrist are utterly overthrown.

We are not to suppose that the church militant, even in her best state in this world, will be altogether free from enemies; or in other words, men who oppose the truth: but then, her outward condition will be much more glorious than ever it was before. The apostle Paul, speaking of the conversion of the Jews, says, it shall be like life from the dead; and who knows how u-
niversally

niversally the gospel will spread in these happy times? It is more than probable, that many places of the world not yet known to Europe, shall then become Christians.

Let it be further observed, that though we speak of an order and series among the seals, trumpets, &c; yet we do not imagine that every event under the first seal is quite finished before another seal is opened; for the white horse in the first seal, and the red horse in the second, are both riding together; as will appear, chap. xix. in the time belonging to the vials: but it has respect chiefly to the commencement of these; as the white horse goeth before the red, and the red before the black, and the seals before the trumpets, &c.; although the event signified by the white horse, may continue after the red horse is come: and so of the rest?

Again, the first two prophecies display the trials and sufferings of the church; the vials shew the ruin of her enemies: the seals, at least the 2d, 3d, and 4th, set forth the miserable condition of the church; as is evident from the fifth, chap. vi. in which we are told, many were killed for the testimony of Jesus, which must be under the former seals. They also plead to be avenged on their enemies, for their cruel persecutions; by which, it is evident, that they had formerly been oppressed by their enemies, as yet unrevenge; which could not be, if the former seals contained judgments on the wicked world. The trumpets declare the miserable situation of the church; and by them God gives an alarm thereof, by the prophets prophesying in sackcloth, chap. xi. and the beast prevailing against the saints, chap. xiii. which is cotemporary with the trumpets. Again when the seventh trumpet blows, chap. xi. 17. it is said God had taken to him his great power and reigned; as if his pow-

er had been dormant under the six former trumpets, because his church was under great affliction. Finally, the vials bring judgments on God's enemies, as appears from the song in the seventh trumpet, chap. xvi. 5. 6. ; it is the shedding of their blood, who had shed the blood of his servants; it is also on the beast, his followers and throne, in the following chapters. And though God sometimes punished particular persecutors in a visible manner, yet such a remarkable change as that, will not agree with a standing persecution, or such a state of it as was under the former two. Though both the seals and trumpets contain the trials and difficulties of the church, yet they are different, not only in time, but in nature, and from different enemies. The seals point out savage cruelty from heathens; the trumpets crafty heresies, and cruel sufferings from professing Christians; which will appear evidently from the following observations. First, the seals are bloody to the church, as appears evident from the fifth; where she cries for vengeance upon them who shed her blood. Again, under the seals, the saints are entirely passive, patiently suffering all manner of hardships from their savage persecutors: but under the trumpets, the case is different; God gives them warning to be active in preparing for that storm. They are also represented as striving, not only in suffering and prayer against the open enemies of the church, but in prophesying, as in chap. ii.; which is more suitably applied in vindicating the truth against pretended friends, than open enemies. Her enemies are also variously described under the trumpets; false prophets and locusts make their appearance, carrying on their design in a clandestine manner. Likewise the effects are very different under the seals; all are cut off promiscuously that profess Christianity; but by the

the trumpets, the waters of life are rendered bitter, the truth corrupted, the stars fall from heaven, and chiefly the prophets are persecuted, maltreated, and ridiculed, as chap. ii. 5. This appears still more evident, from God's preparing his own people against the trumpets, more than against the seals, chap. vi. 7. ; doubtless for this reason, that though God will not prevent his people from the most cruel sufferings, yet he will preserve their soul from being poisoned with pernicious errors ; as is clear, by comparing chap. iv. 9. with xii.

From all which, we may safely conclude, that the first period of the church, *viz.* that contained under the seals, is to be fixed at the end of the persecutions by Heathen emperors ; and meeting with new trials from false teachers, and corrupt doctrines, patronized both by clergy and laity of great power ; which is a trial very different from the former, but of a more dangerous tendency : therefore, lest after being made free from persecution, she might think she had nothing more to fear, the Lord sounds a trumpet in her ears, to alarm her with some awful ensuing event. This happened about the year 306, when the emperor Constantine became Christian, and permitted the church to enjoy peace by public authority : upon this the Arian heresy, and others, which shall be named afterwards, broke out with great violence in the church ; which the trumpets portend, and of which they give warning.

Though errors prevailed in the church from the days of the apostles, yet they came not to such a height as afterwards. Therefore we do not mean, that the church was free from errors under the seals, or persecution under the trumpets ; the contrary of this is evident : but, under the seals, bloody persecution came to its height,

height, and was more constant; again, under the trumpets, heresies and corrupt doctrines arrived at their height, and were, for a time, predominant in the church. The persecution under the seals differ from that under the trumpets, in respect of the persecutors; the former being the open, the latter the secret enemies of the church of Christ.

Further, we may conclude, that the period between the trumpets and vials is to be fixed at that time when God began to punish Antichrist, and to make the light of the glorious gospel break out with more splendor than formerly, which had been much eclipsed under his tyranny: this happened sometime after the 1500; for the first vial is poured out on the worshipers of the beast; so he and they are gradually to be punished by every succeeding vial, till he is cast into the lake in chap. xvi.

We shall favour our readers with an observation of the famous Lord Napier of Merchiston. The treatise from which we took it is dedicated to James VI. when king of Scotland, which pleads for its antiquity; and as his Lordship is well known in the learned world, for being the inventor of the Logarithms, it may be supposed the treatise is not wholly contemptible. His Lordship, after laying down thirty-six propositions, in order to determine the true meaning of the Revelation, proceeds to give a short paraphrase of the whole, with notes, reasons, and amplifications.

In his second proposition, he makes the seven trumpets to be cotemporary with the seven vials; (the contrary, and reasons of which, we have shewn at full length in our essay). However, he begins the seals, as we have done, by the first preaching of the gospel; and the rise of Anti-
christ,

christ, he supposes to begin about the time Constantine left Rome and went to Constantinople.

His Lordship has made some pretty curious remarks in his fifth proposition: he supposes every trumpet to contain the space of 245 years; the first begins at the year 71, when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans. The reason his Lordship gives for beginning the jubilees at the year 71, is, that from the beginning of the world to the year that the Israelites divided and took possession of the land of Canaan, and from that year to the end of the captivity, and beginning of Daniel's seventy weeks, and from that time again to the destruction of Jerusalem, at which time Daniel's seventy weeks ended; all these periods fall upon jubilee years: so that, from the commandment being given to rebuild and repair Jerusalem to the time of its final destruction was seventy weeks, or 490 prophetic years; at which period, *viz.* at the year 71, his Lordship makes the Christian jubilees to commence, and to continue to the end of the world. The second at the year 316, when Constantine transported the imperial seat from Rome to Byzantium, and left Pope Sylvester at Rome to begin the Papal kingdom. The third, *anno* 561, when Narses recovered Rome, and made peace with the Ostrogoths. The fourth about the year 806, when Charlemagne became emperor of Germany and Rome. The fifth, *anno* 1051, when Zadock began the first dominion of the Turks. The 6th, *anno* 1296, when Othman began the first empire of the four Mahomedan nations. The 7th, *anno* 1541, when the reformation began to take place. And the last, *anno* 1786, when he thinks the world will come to an end, or some very great revolution take place. It is very remarkable, that, by adding another of his Lordship's jubilees to the year 1786, it will
make

make 2031; and, according to our calculation, adding the 1260 years of the beast's reign to the 557, when he got Lombardy, Ravenna, and Rome, it is 2037, just six years more than his Lordship's jubilee; when, it is supposed by many, the world will end, as we have observed elsewhere.

The Reason he gives for fixing these periods, is from the jubilees under the Jewish œconomy, which were kept at the end of every forty-nine years, and, in the beginning of the fiftieth year, the trumpet sounded; therefore he supposes these periods contain exactly five jubilees, which is precisely 245 years: so that, according to his Lordship's calculation, some very great revolution will happen in a very few years."

In the last place, we shall further observe, that the sixth vial ends when antichrist is cast into the pit, as in chap. xix. The seventh ends with the final overthrow of all the church's enemies, and the consummation of all things.

There are also three explanatory prophecies, which throw great light upon the others. The first is in chap. xii. xiii. and xiv. describing the rise, reign, and begun ruin of Antichrist, and the dragon, whom he succeeds, chap. xii.

The second is chap. xvii. xviii. and xix. particularly describing his ruin, especially by the fifth and sixth vials. The third is chap. xx. xxi. and xxii. shewing the happy condition of the church militant and triumphant. That these three prophecies must be cotemporary with, and comprehended under, the principal ones, or some part of them, though under more obscure types, is also evident. For, if the principal prophecies are so connected with each other, that one of them immediately introduceth the other, and yet so, as all of them together contain a view of the church-affairs, from the beginning to the end, then all these explanatory ones must be cotemporary

rary with some of the former ; and what is contained in them must be of the same nature, and have a relation to the former ; this is clear from what has been said. It will be still more evident from considering the nature of both : the same thing is in chap. xii. as in chap. vi. ; also, the xiii. chapter agrees with the trumpets, as the xvii. xviii. and xix. do with the vials ; with this difference, that the principal prophecies contain a short and more obscure view of events, but the explanatory ones discover them in a more full and conspicuous manner. The first sheweth what the events are ; the second, points out the manner in which they happen, the instruments by whom, and the circumstances relating to them. That the xii. chapter is cotemporary with the seals, the xiii. and xiv. with the trumpets, the xvii. xviii. and xix. with the vials, is evident. Observe that the ruin of Antichrist, chap. xvii. and xviii. is undeniably cotemporary with the vials, chap. xvi. which begins and finishes that ruin. Again, the rise and reign of Antichrist, chap. xiii. immediately precede his ruin ; and so must immediately go before the vials, and be cotemporary with the trumpets, which also precede the vials. Lastly, the dragon's pursuing the church, chap. xii. is antecedent to the rise of Antichrist, chap. xiii. ; and must therefore be cotemporary with the seals, that are immediately before the trumpets, which cotemporate with the rise of Antichrist ; according to that sure and well-known maxim, things which agree to a third thing, agree among themselves. If then the seals belong to that time which immediately goes before the trumpets, and the dragon's persecution belongs to that time also, then they must belong to one and the self-same time ; and so of the rest.

Or, in other words, the seals contain the infancy of the church, and her first trials ; the xii. chapter

chapter most certainly does the same; therefore they are cotemporary together. In chap. xiii. the beast succeeds the dragon, as the trumpets do the seals; which again demonstrate, that the beast, chap. xiii. and the trumpets, are of the same time; so must also the vials, which succeed the trumpets, be cotemporary with the church's reviving, chap. iv. which immediately depends on Antichrist's height, chap. xiii.

This appears to be the native form of the types; the Holy Spirit, who dictated those prophecies, designing to point out things succeeding to each other, by one manner of expression, in seven types; and when he stoppeth, or maketh a digression, in order to shew what is further needful, for preparing or comforting his church, or for illustrating and explaining things contained in these, he expresseth himself in a different manner as after the trumpets, chap. ix. to the xvi. And again, when he returns to the series of the story, he resumeth his former way of describing events by sevens, as in chap. xvi. We can assign no other reason why he makes the digressions, and returns to the regular series again, but that he may enable us the better to comprehend what part of this prophecy we ought to unite to another, and what part of it we should take as an explanatory repetition of something already said.

Thus far we thought necessary to premise, in the beginning of this essay, that we might be able to proceed with more perspicuity and certainty in this arduous attempt.

It is not our intention to enter into a minute explication of the seven seals; this would be foreign to our design, which is to hunt Antichrist out of his lurking holes, and shew him to the world in all his gawdy trappings.

But as the seals are connected with the trumpets, and the one could not be so well understood, without

without slightly viewing the other. We shall endeavour, with the greatest humility, and in dependence on divine aid, to attempt an explication of them in as concise a manner as possible, yet so as to be understood.

C H A P. VI.

In the former chapter we see, that Christ received from his Almighty Father a sealed book; in this, we perceive him opening it, seal by seal. Christ reveals to John the deep counsels of God, which were hidden from former ages; the only-begotten Son, who lay in the bosom of the Father, hath revealed them.—He only received authority, and HE only was endowed with ability to reveal them.

Verses 1. 2. “ And I saw, (says John) when “ the Lamb opened one of the seals,” &c. The person mentioned here under the appellation of the LAMB, is the Lord Jesus Christ, the second Person of the adorable Trinity; who is, by the evangelist John, called “ the Lamb of God, who “ taketh away the sins of the world.” To him, as Mediator, God hath committed the management of all human affairs; as he saith himself, “ All power is committed to me in heaven and “ earth;” and no other person, no not the most mighty angel, was able to open these seals, or that sealed book of God’s decrees, but he who is JEHOVAH Jesus, or Emmanuel, God in our nature; as we may see, chap. v. 7.

Commentators are of opinion, that the four beasts, mentioned in this book, are the four evangelists. One of them invites John, and all mankind, to come and see those great mysteries concerning the church: formerly unknown to the world, but now revealed by our almighty Prophet, for the comfort and consolation of his church.

The first thing he invites us to behold, is a white horse and a rider, or one sitting on him.

By horse and rider, according to Scripture-language, is meant some dispensation of God to his church, either by angels or men, or more immediately by God himself; as we may see, by comparing Zech. i. 8. and 10. The prophet, in the 8th verse, beholds a man riding, and behind him more red horses, speckled and white. In verse 10. he informs us, that these are they whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth; which can have no other meaning, but the dispensations of his grace and providence.

By the white colour of the horse is doubtless meant consolation, joy, victory, and triumph: this is both agreeable to Scripture and prophane history; as in chap. xix. 11. Christ is described, in his triumph, as riding on a white horse; also, the Roman conquerors were carried to the Capitol, in chariots drawn by white horses.

The next thing to be observed, is the rider's armour; he has a bow and crown: the bow illustrated in Psal. xlv. "Thine arrows are sharp in "the hearts of the King's enemies." The word of God, in the hand of the Spirit, is sharper than a two edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of the joints and marrow, and a discern-er of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Also, his crown was given him: this may signify great honour was conferred upon him, for the success that attended his ministry; as must appear from what follows: "that he went forth "conquering, and to conquer;" that is, by the faithful preaching of the gospel, sinners, who are stout-hearted and far from righteousness, are, like the jailor, pierced to the heart by the convincing power of the divine Spirit, and made willing to accept of the imputed righteousness of Christ. This explication is agreeable to the passages above quoted,

quoted, viz. Psal. xlv. and Rev. xix.: it is also suitable to the events that immediately happened after our Saviour's ascension.

Mr Joseph Mead, Sir Isaac Newton, and some others, suppose that the first four seals relate entirely to the judgments that were executed on the Gentiles; and that the prophecies concerning the affairs of the church do not commence till the fifth seal; and that Christ's riding on the white horse, conquering and to conquer, is emblematical of victories obtained, to the destruction of his enemies. In this, however, we beg leave to differ from so great men: for though a white horse may be an emblem of victories gained, yet it would not be so proper an emblem of only the same sort of terrible slaughter of Christ's enemies, as, under the very next seal, is represented by a rider on a red horse; and it would seem somewhat unaccountable, that the surprising progress of the gospel, by the preaching of the apostles, and their immediate successors, which, according to Sir Isaac's scheme, was mostly after this vision, especially among the idolatrous Gentiles, should not be taken notice of at the beginning of a revelation, in which the church was so nearly concerned. We shall not detain the reader longer in this place, with a confutation of this opinion of these very learned men, as this is done more fully in the sequel.

We shall now proceed to the opening of the second seal, in verses 3. and 4. This, like the former, is ushered in, by the second beast, with "Come and see;" it is also typified by a horse and rider, but the colour of this horse is very different from the former: for as white is the emblem of peace, so red is the emblem of war; and as this rider has a great sword given him, it is evident blood must follow. But it is not so easy to determine, whether he is to cut off wicked

men for despising the gospel, or persecutors of the Christian religion, or raise persecutions against the church, or all of them together, which is more probable; for these three are so connected together, that one of them cannot be long without the other. The Roman emperors despised the gospel, for which God severely punished them; they, in their turn, imputed the evils inflicted upon them to Christians, who they supposed were troublers of the world; upon which account they published the most severe edicts, and raised the most cruel persecutions against them. This seems to agree well with the cotemporary prophecy, chap. xii. where this red or bloody colour is described or explained, by the dragon waiting to devour the man-child newly born. Our blessed Lord also declared, Matth. x. 34. 35. Luke xii. 51. "That he came not to send peace, but a sword," to kindle a fire already begun.

This prophecy may, with propriety, comprehend the two first persecutions; the first raised by Nero, *anno* 66, the second by Domitian sometime after, which began in the year 97. These two emperors were the first, who, by their cruel edicts, excited the enemies of Christianity to massacre and torment the Christians, with unrelenting fury. According to church-history, several of the apostles, and many other excellent men, suffered martyrdom by them.

Verses 5. and 6. In opening the third seal, John hears the third beast say, "Come and see." Something remarkable is to be observed of this beast, who is said, in chap. iv. 7. to have the face of a man. The first beast has the face of a lion, which expressed the undaunted boldness and courage of the apostles and their successors, who first spread the gospel through the world. The second beast is said to be like a calf, or ox, which denotes his patience in bearing sufferings,
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his humility and diligence in the great work committed to him. Now this third beast has the face of a man, who is endowed with wisdom, reason, and understanding, above the brute creation: so the Lord furnished his ministers, of those times, with more than an ordinary degree of wisdom and prudence; for which the church had more than ordinary occasion, as will be seen in the sequel.

The colour of this horse is said to be black, and his rider had in his hand a pair of balances. Black is a colour commonly wore in mourning, and doubtless presaged some dismal calamity to befall the church. By the balances, the wheat, and barely here mentioned, one would be apt to imagine, some dreadful famine is foretold; but we read of none, in a natural way, at the time here alluded to, except in Africa. Nor is it probable, that a famine could happen in a natural way, and the wine and oil be spared. The prophet Amos speaks of a famine, not of bread or water, but of the word of God; and this is more suitable to the state of the church. Famine is sometimes mentioned, in holy writ, as some grievous affliction of the saints, as well as the sword and prison are, see Rom. viii. 35. During persecution, the rage of the persecutors does not stop at murdering and torturing the people of God; but in banishing, imprisoning, and confiscating their goods, so that that they were prevented from attending the public ordinances. The persecutions that followed after the two formerly mentioned, were levelled chiefly against the ministers of the gospel; that by destroying them, they might the more easily extirpate the Christian religion.

The persecutions raised in the second century, after the death of Domitian, against the church, are applicable to the opening of this third seal.

After Domitian's bloody rage, the church enjoyed peace for a year; then followed that under Trajan, which continued under Hadrian and Antonius the first. She had again a short interval under Commodus; though a more vicious man than any of the other three. It broke out again in the reign of Antonius Maximus, and others. The persecutions were even continued under the emperors that did not actively persecute, because they did not restrain them.

All Christian assemblies were prohibited, under the severest penalties. Trajan condemned all meetings of Christians, as contrary to law; by which edicts, ministers were banished, public assemblies deserted, and the people starved and famished of spiritual food.

The history of these times inform us, that these most abandoned emperors exerted their utmost efforts, utterly to extirpate Christianity; by banishing its professors, exposing them to severe toils and labours, and destroying their goods, in order to enervate and dispirit them. Trajan banished ten thousand soldiers, and many ministers, into desert islands; besides many were starved to death; particularly Hyacinthus, one of Trajan's principal lords of the bed-chamber. Can there then be any doubt, that the opening of this seal happened at this time; especially, if we further consider, that many gross errors and heresies then abounded, the purity and simplicity of doctrine was obscured, and many thousands declined from the truth; all which took place about the beginning of Trajan's reign: about this time too began the observation of holy days, such as Easter, &c. and a great reverencing of martyrs; also a dissention between the eastern and western churches, which were never afterwards heartily reconciled. Notwithstanding these errors and dissensions, there were many learned and good men

in the church, who wrote as well as suffered in defence of the truth; which is likewise suitable to the third beast having the face of a man: by their means too, the wine and oil were not hurt; that is, the essential truths were preserved and vindicated, by their writings against heretics.

We are sensible, that some very learned men, particularly bishop Newton, doctor Guise, and others, suppose this to be meant of a natural famine in the empire, during the reign of the Antonines, sent as a judgment upon the empire, for persecuting the Christians, which happened between the years 138 and 139. We hope the reader will be satisfied with the manner in which we have applied it, as far more suitable to the type, than a famine in a natural way.

In verses 7. and 8. We behold the fourth seal opened with the usual exhortation, Come and see. Formerly we saw a black, now a pale horse, whose rider's name is death, and hell following at his heels; and power was given them over a third part of the earth, to kill with the sword, hunger, death, and wild beasts: this is a most dreadful description, and we need not be surprized if some terrible calamity should ensue. Under the former seals were sword and famine, now death and the beasts are added; evidently pointing at some signal calamity that is to befall the church: this is clear, for they are all of one kind, as appears by the gradation conspicuous in them. The red horse wounds, the black horse occasions fainting, and the pale horse killeth. Hence it is said, power is given, not to one, but to them altogether, as having one commission; so that the sword, famine, and death, are joined together under this seal, to shew that some terrible judgments shall ensue: seeing then that some of them portend the church's afflictions, the rest must do so too.

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There are two opinions with respect to the time of this prophecy, but both agree in the main; that the bloody persecution, which ended in the time of Constantine, *anno* 310, is typified by this prophecy.

After the persecution of Decius, the church enjoyed peace almost for 40 years; during which time, the purity and power of the gospel were much eclipsed, divisions and contentions took place: this provoked God to let loose that bloody monster Dioclesian, and his colleague Heracleus Maximianus; who had for their associates, Jovius and Constantius. These emperors uniting all their craft and violence, to extirpate Christianity entirely out of the provinces of the empire. 1. They put to the choice of the soldiers and officers, either to sacrifice to their gods, or quit their service. 2. They made the same offers to magistrates, with promises to both if they would obey. 3. They demolished all churches or places of worship. 4. They prohibited all meetings of Christians. And when these had not the desired effect, they broke out into open violence, striving who should excel the other in savage cruelty; except Constantius, who was friendly to Christians.

In order to shew how exactly this prophecy corresponded with this, or rather with these persecutions, we may observe, that they were universal through the whole empire, and continued for ten years without intermission. In some places, whole hundreds were butchered in a day, whole churches full of people were burnt at once; as also whole cities, for refusing to sacrifice to idols; whole legions were put to death at once: particularly one legion, though they willingly consented to serve against public enemies, were massacred, with their commander Manutius, because they refused to persecute the Christians.

Eusebius

Eusebius declares, that he saw the persecutors so wearied, and their swords so blunted, that they were obliged to be relieved by others. In one month seventeen thousand were slain ; and, in Egypt alone, 144 thousand were put to death ; which shews what great numbers were destroyed in the empire.

The cruel tortures inflicted on Christians, is also worthy of our observation ; many engines never heard of before, were invented for that purpose ; such as iron grates to roast them on, brazen bulls exceedingly heated to shut them up in, iron pikes in barrels, &c.

Again they were dragged by horses, exposed to wild beasts, sent to sea in boats without provisions, and many other unheard-of cruelties, shocking to human nature ; a plain indication of the hellish disposition of the persecutors. Eusebius further informs us, that these savage barbarians vied with each other, who should invent the most cruel tortures. They were even so void of humanity, that they had no regard to the ties of blood ; their nearest relations, even their children and nieces were put to death : Dioclesian slew his own wife, because she would not renounce the Christian religion.

To conclude, a great mortality prevailed in this reign. Men died faster than the living were able to bury them ; so that dogs, being accustomed to human flesh, became a terror to the survivors, lest they should fall upon them too : this put them upon killing the dogs for their own preservation. From all these considerations, we may plainly perceive, how suitable the events were to the description typified in opening this seal ; which, with propriety, may be called death and his awful attendants.

The very learned bishop Newton supposeth this period began with Maximin and ended with Dioclesian,

Dioclesian, which was about fifty years ; and he makes the last persecution to fall out under the following seal : as he applies most of the judgments, mentioned in these seals, to the Roman empire, and the vast commotions that happened in it. We will not take upon us to deny, that this prophecy may be applied in a secondary sense, in the way he hath done it ; yet we cannot imagine, that the Spirit of God, who dictated this book, would condescend, contrary to his usual method, to give a full and particular account of what was to befall a wicked, idolatrous, and abandoned race of men, and take no notice of the dreadful persecutions of his own church. It is quite evident from the sacred page, that the church of God has been under his peculiar care from the beginning of time, and will continue so to the end ; so that all the mutations and revolutions, that have been foretold in scripture concerning the Heathen nations, are only in so far as they are connected with the church. She is the primary, they are the secondary care of providence, and are so only for her sake. As another argument, our Saviour says, “ I pray not for the world, but for them thou hast given me out of the world ;” so neither would he appoint prophecy for these he did not pray for.

Though we are obliged to differ from this very eminent and learned prelate, and others of his way of thinking, in many particulars, yet we are of opinion, that his paraphrase is a master piece of erudition, and is well worthy of the perusal of all the literati. Thus far we thought necessary to observe, in the beginning of our essay, as we will have frequent occasion in the sequel, to quote this celebrated writer, especially in the appendix. Therefore we hope our readers will pardon this digression, if it may be called one.

Verse 9. In opening the fifth seal, the beloved apostle

apostle saw under the altar, the souls of them that were slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.

We have seen, in opening these three last seals, what a dreadful havock has been made in the church by cruel tyrants, What became of the persons who were thus cruelly butchered? The opening of this seal removes that doubt, and shews, that the souls of good men are precious in God's sight; and though, for holy and wise purposes, he may suffer thir persecutors to ride triumphant for a season, yet, in the end, he will inflict upon them punishments adequate to their wickedness.

This seal having no horse and rider, &c. as the former, it may properly belong to all the persecutions; with a design to comfort the surviving people of God, and to shew them that their souls shall be happy with him, when their bodies are mouldering in the dust. This will appear evident from the following verses; where it is said, white robes are given them, and that they must rest till their brethren should finish their course as they had done. The chief design of this delay is this, God's time of judging the wicked is not yet come; he hath more sufferers to perfect, a certain number designed for suffering, as well as for glory; many were yet to suffer under Antichrist, who must also obtain their crown of martyrdom; this is a sufficient reason why their suit is denied.

We observed a little above, that the learned bishop Newton has applied this fifth seal to the last persecution, but for what reason we cannot perceive; as all the former are described with a horse and a rider in a warlike attitude, either with a design to let loose the instruments of hell in persecuting the church, or to punish them for
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their wickedness, or both; as has been already observed.

In the 12th and following verses, John beheld the sixth seal opened with a great earthquake, and many other convulsions of nature, which preface some signal judgments to ensue. Animate and inanimate things are here mentioned, *viz.* the sun, heaven, and stars; also kings, great men, mighty men, captains, &c. Some alarming event is certainly here foretold; the application of it however is difficult: but whatever may be its remote or secondary meaning, yet its primary or main design, must be to preface some particular judgment that was to be inflicted on the enemies of Christ's kingdom; for it is on kings, captains, and great men of the earth, who are said to flee from Christ; which cannot be the church; therefore it may probably refer to the persecutors and Heathen, which might be evinced by many arguments; but our design is to be more particular on the trumpets and vials, and to give only a brief explication of the seals.

However we have for once, the authority of the above-mentioned bishop Newton, in our explication of this seal. After shewing that the very same images, the very same expressions are employed by other prophets, concerning the mutations and alterations of religions and Governments, he observes, " That the fall of any of these cities and kingdoms, was not of greater concern and consequence to the world, nor more deserving to be described in such pompous figures, than the fall of the Roman-Pagan empire, when the great lights of the Heathen world, the sun, moon, and stars, the powers civil and ecclesiastical, were all eclipsed and obscured; the Heathen emperors were slain, the Heathen priests and augurs were extirpated, the Heathen magistrates and officers were removed, and Heathen temples
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were demolished, and their revenues were appropriated to better uses."

We shall only further add, that whilst the three forementioned emperors were proceeding, with unrelenting fury, in persecuting the church, God raised up a deliverer, in the person of Constantine the Great, who was declared emperor in Britain; and whilst he was resolving to free the world of the cruel Maxentius, who lived at Rome, a fiery cross appeared to him in the air, with an inscription in legible letters, *IN THIS OVERCOME*: this not only encouraged him to proceed, but also to embrace the Christian religion; and by this he obtained victory over all his enemies, and became a happy mean, in the hand of God, of delivering the church from all her enemies, and inflicting upon them the judgments threatened in this seal. By this means also, the Christian religion was established by law in the Roman empire, on the ruins of idolatry: all which, we think, may be comprehended under this seal.

During the opening of this sixth seal, we have seen light begun to dawn upon the church; and her greatest enemies now become her greatest friends, by Constantine embracing the Christian religion. He was zealous, not only in having faithful men about his person, and religious worship performed in public and private; but in erecting schools, settling ministers, assembling synods, and being present at them, as that of Nice; likewise condemning heresies, and tolerating none but the Christian religion. So that he may be truly said to be a nursing father to the church.

Before we proceed to the seventh seal, it will be necessary to observe, that as this seal ushers in the trumpets, which deface the beauty of the church, and marr her comeliness, by the rise and progress of Antichrist, the Lord shews his care of the church in the 7th chapter; for four angels

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are commanded to hold the four winds, that they blow not on the earth, sea, or tree, till he had sealed the servants of God. By winds, in sacred writ, is sometimes meant temporal judgments on civil states, as Jer. xlix. 36.; which may be applied to the time we are speaking of. During Constantine's reign, and some time after, the empire enjoyed peace; but it was soon over-run by the Goths, Vandals, Saracens, and other barbarous nations, which were very favourable for the rise of Antichrist. These were for a time restrained, that the church might have a short breathing, and be prepared for the following storm. By winds; again, sometimes is meant, the blowing of the Holy Spirit upon ordinances; both rendering them effectual to salvation, and preserving them pure from heresies and errors. According to this acceptation, the holding of the winds will signify, the preventing Antichrist from infecting the church all at once, with his damnable tenets.

By winds, again, in scripture, we may understand spiritual judgments; as heresy in doctrine, schisms, contentions, divisions, &c. which have an impetuous force like winds, driving unstable souls from their steadfastness, Eph. iv. 14. "That we be not children tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men," &c. Wherefore, holding the winds, taken in this sense, means, that after the church's freedom from persecution, a new storm of heresy and schism ensued, and carried all before it; but it was bounded and restrained by God, till he had sealed his elect, that it might have no power over them.

We are of opinion, that this last sense is meant here, and that these winds import the increase of false doctrine and schism in the church; this agrees

agrees best with what follows ; which is, to guard good men to beware of those evils.

Through the whole of this book, we do not find the people of God preserved from temporal calamities more than others ; we must therefore understand it of spiritual trials, and these of the most grievous kinds, from which only they are peculiarly exempted, as in Matth. xxiv. 24. This exemption chiefly belongs to the evils of Antichrist, of which the world shares, and from which the pious are screened ; as appears from chap. xiii. 8. and xiv. 1. These sealed ones are said to be undefiled ; that is, are preserved from spiritual pollution.

We shall briefly conclude what we design upon this 7th chapter ; by observing, that no sooner was the church free from open persecution, than the devil sowed his tares among the wheat ; that is errors of all kinds, whereby God permitted many secure, earthly minded, untable, proud, conceited professors, to be carried away by them.

Error is one of those plagues, which God, in his justice, useth to let loose upon an ungrateful world ; who have enjoyed the gospel in peace and plenty, and have abused it : which alas ! too much the case at this present time. Therefore, when delusion comes to its greatest height, as Thess. ii. 10. ; or a false prophet comes to speak lies in the name of the Lord, as Deut. xiii. 1. 2. ; they are both said to be sent by him, or permitted by him, as a just plague for despising the truth. Since error is then a plague, how ridiculous is the opinion of those, who are disposed to tolerate every religious principle ; is not this letting loose the winds with a witness ? How many professors are tossed, ensnared, and enebriated, with a full glut of their own ways ? Have not the Arians, and many others, been hurried headlong to the ruin of their precious souls ? Have

not the Pelegian, Arminian, Socinian, Arian, Popish, and other errors, made greater havock in the church, than many years famine, wars, and pestilence? and have destroyed more souls than these have done bodies. When error is let loose as a plague, it is well suited and strengthened to carry its point. They pour in together like a mighty deluge, bearing all down before them; therefore it is called strong delusion, and a spirit of error, as in *Thess. ii. 11*: because it has then received a commission from God, and must continue till that be executed; in the same manner as the sword and famine.

A diversity of errors makes the truth appear doubtful to the men of the world. For in these primitive times, some denied Christ to be true man, as Apollinaris; others denied him to be true God; as Ebion, Arius, Photinus, and others. These differed from each other: Arius called him God, but a God created in time; Photinus and his followers asserted, that he was only a mere man. Some again said that he had two persons, as well as two natures; and others maintained that he had but one nature. These called Tritheists, supposed that there were three Gods, as well as three persons. The Novatians were too rigid in church discipline, admitting none to fellowship who had once given offence; though they said, they might receive pardon from God. Others again, too easily admitted the scandalous, without any evidence of a change; not only into church communion, but also to be office-bearers in the church. The Papists also on the one hand, ascribed too much to good works, and the Antimonians too little. Likewise Prelacy, putting all church-government in the person of a bishop. The Independants, conferring all indifferently, upon every member of the church, &c. These are sufficient to clear up the meaning

ing of the prophecy, and to put good men on their guard against the pernicious errors of Antichrist, who was soon afterwards to make his appearance. In the following verses of the 7th chapter, an innumerable company are sealed and secured against that dreadful torrent of error, vice, and immorality, which followed under the seventh seal and trumpets.

C H A P. VIII.

Verse 1. Upon opening the seventh seal, there is silence in heaven for the space of half an hour. Here a definite time is put for an indefinite; meaning a very short space. By heaven, must certainly be meant the militant church; for in the heaven where God gloriously resides, there can be no interruptions of noise or silence. It must therefore mean, that peace and quietness in the church, after persecution ceased, during some years of Constantine's reign, before the heresies of the Donatists and Arians broke out; which was only for a short time. This is very consistent with what follows. I saw, says John, peace for a little time, till all things were prepared for the ensuing storm; that is, till the fundamental truths were fully established, and publicly confirmed, for preserving God's people from the snares of gross heresies that immediately followed.

Before we proceed to explain the following verses, we shall lay before our readers the opinion of bishop Newton, in his own words. "The seventh seal or period, (says he) is of much longer duration, and comprehends many more events, than any of the former seals. It comprehends indeed seven periods, distinguished by the sounding of seven trumpets. At the opening of this seal, (verse 1.) there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour, is a sign that the peace of the church would continue but for a short season.

It is an interval and pause, as it were, between the foregoing and succeeding visions. It is a mark of solemnity to procure attention, and to prepare the mind for a great and signal event; and not without an allusion to a ceremony among the Jews: as Philo informs us, the incense used to be offered before the morning, and after the evening sacrifice; and while the sacrifices were made, (2 Chron. xxv.—28.) the voices, instruments, and trumpets sounded, while the priest went into the temple to burn incense, (Luke i. 10.) all were silent, and the people prayed without to themselves. Now this was the morning of the church; and therefore, the silence precedes the sounding of the trumpets."

Verse 2. Seven angels are seen standing before God, to whom were given seven trumpets; what the use of these trumpets is, will be seen in verse 6. of this chapter; we shall only observe at present, that they had a double use. First, to give an alarm of some approaching assault, in order to rouse the church to watchfulness; for as the apostle says, if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? Secondly, to summon the congregation, assembly, or host, to some undertaking: and in this case it implies some offensive action, as the other was defensive; viz. the letting loose enemies against the church, as the former in defending it; but both are employed by God's special orders. The angels too are ministering spirits, waiting on God for a commission; and therefore trumpets are given them, and they must act according to orders. Their number is seven, though in the seventh chapter there were only four that stopt the four winds, till the seven were let loose. Thus the winds are, as it were, loosed gradually, and not permitted to blow all at once, but one after another;

ther; that men may be prepared for what follows.

Verses 3. 4. 5. Though the seal is now opened, and trumpets given to the angels, yet they are not suffered to blow, till the angel at the altar has made intercession. This is no other than the Angel of the covenant; who, in allusion to the high priest under the law, makes intercession for his people to God, that he would not impute sin to them, nor suffer them to be led away with the errors of Antichrist. He also intercedes against his enemies, as in verse 5. He takes the censer, fills it with the fire off the altar, and casts it into the earth; that is upon the wicked world, inflicting judgments upon Antichrist; as will be observed afterwards: then follows the sounding of the trumpets. For as God had formerly ordered the four angels in chap. 7th, not to hurt the earth till his servants were sealed; so now he commands the seven angels to proceed when the elect are secured.

Verse 6. The seven angels, who had received the seven trumpets, prepared themselves to sound. It may be asked, Why these angels did not begin to sound, when they received their trumpets? The answer is easy, they had not received their orders. Something was previously to be done, as we said above; the saints were to be sealed, they and their instruments were to be prepared. As Moses had the pattern of the tabernacle, and all its furniture, shewed him on mount Sinai, so every particular circumstance, in the New-testament church, is fixed, both as to time and order, by infinite Wisdom.

Let this be a caveat to such as design to enter on holy orders, not to assume to themselves a character, which they have no right to exercise: surely, they ought at least to ask counsel of God, before they engage in such a sacred office. It is

is not enough, that men have natural and acquired abilities, in order to profit others, and save their own souls ; they ought also to have personal religion ; that is, to feel experimentally on their own heart, the truths they preach to others : or, in other words, to have passed from death to life, as it is expressed in sacred writ.

Then, in dependence on divine aid, they should stir up the gift that is in them, as Paul says to Timothy, and boldly engage in the most glorious work that men can be engaged in, having nothing in view but the glory of God and the good of souls.

The Prophecy concerning the sounding of these trumpets would not have been easily understood, had not many of the events, been already past, and seem to agree well with what is foretold. However, we shall attempt the explication of them, with the deepest humility, and with a dependence on the aid of that almighty Spirit who dictated this book. But first, it will be necessary to make some remarks on them.

We observed formerly, that this prophecy commenced with the reign of Constantine, and ends at Antichrist's begun fall ; when he arrives at his height, and the vials begin to be poured out on him

It is also cotemporary with, and has a respect to, the prophecy of the beast, chap. xiii. and xi. Likewise the rise and end of the prophecy of the beast will be cotemporary with this ; and that these belong to the church, in her spiritual trials.

Again, the fifth trumpet evidently discovers Antichrist in a clear and open manner ; as may be seen, by comparing chap. ix. 4. with chap. xiii. 8. The persons are the same, have the same characters, and are preserved from the same spiritual injury. The sixth trumpet introduceth the Mahomedans, on the back of the former ; they
being

being ſent as a puniſhment upon Antichriſt for his idolatry, who makes his public appearance a little after the year 600. Therefore the firſt four trumpets muſt be antecedent to that time, and muſt contain the ſtate of the church from the year 300, or thereabout (where the ſeal is finiſhed) till that time.

We may further remark, that the defection of the church, gradually declining from purity in doctrine, and ſimplicity in worſhip, ends when Antichriſt arrives at his height; and that this defection includes in it ſome temporal judgment on the wicked, and trial on the righteous, eſpecially under Antichriſt.

It is remarkable, that in all the other alterations of periods, ſo in this, the overturning of the viſible church is compared to the overturning the world, and plaguing earth, ſea, rivers, ſun, moon, &c. By the principal prophecies of this book, three worlds are ſucceſſively defaced. Firſt, the Heathen world, chap. vi. and under the ſixth ſeal. Secondly, The Chriſtian world, which is authorized by the Roman empire, and eſtabliſhed by law. This world gradually declines under the trumpets, and becomes Antichriſtian. Thirdly, This Antichriſtian world is demolifhed, in its turn, under the vials, by the deſignation of ſea, earth, &c. Thus, in the Roman empire, all the different conditions of the church are compared to different worlds.

In order the more to confirm the truth of this obſervation, let us compare the ſuitableneſs of the trumpets and vials, in their effects. The firſt trumpet is on the earth, the firſt vial alſo is poured out on the ſame; the ſecond on the ſea, the third on the rivers, the fourth on the ſun; and the fifth trumpet ſets Antichriſt on his throne, the fifth vial is poured on the throne or ſeat of the beaſt. The ſixth trumpet looſeth the
angels

angels at the Euphrates ; the sixth vial drieth up that river. By which it is evident, that Antichrist is destroyed in the same regular order that he came to his height ; and as he introduced a new counterfeit church, or world, by afflicting, darkening, and obscuring the true church, so he shall be destroyed in his turn, and the true church shall be erected on his ruins.

The order and sum of the trumpets we conceive to be this : the first four trumpets, when compared to the three that follow, may be called the lesser woes ; and contain the declining state of the church, for 320 years, from Constantine's time till Antichrist appeared, a little after the year 600.

Enemies began to sap the very foundations of religion ; such as Arius, Macedonius, Eutiches, Nestorius, &c. All these heresies were condemned by the church, in the first four famous councils. The first was held at Nice, by Constantine, *anno* 325 ; wherein was condemned the heresy of Arius, who denied the Godhead of Christ. The second was at Constantinople, by Gratian and Theodosius, *anno* 380 ; which condemned Macedonius, who denied the personality of the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the adorable Trinity. The third was at Ephesus, under Theodosius II. *anno* 451 ; this condemned Eutiches, who ascribed but one nature to Christ.

These, being open and avowed enemies to truth, were more easily discovered than what follows ; for church-government is next corrupted. To accomplish this, the devil puffed up churchmen with pride, and ambition for power and grandeur ; from hence arose dissensions among them, which gradually weakened the power of religion, and hurt its salutary effects upon the souls of men.

The next thing this arch-enemy of mankind attempted,

attempted, was to poison the rivers and fountains of waters, *viz.* the pure doctrines of the gospel; and free-will, justification by good works, external holiness, merit, dispensations, penances, purgatory, sacraments, and traditions, are introduced, instead of the native purity and simplicity of religion, which was now corrupted in many parts of the world; and these pernicious tenets were propagated by men, who once appeared pillars in the church, as Pelagius and Origen: these we suppose to have happened under the third trumpet.

In the fourth, the light of the glorious gospel is still more darkened, and its beauty obscured; for the Scriptures, the purest sources of divine knowledge, are veiled, and kept from the knowledge of the laity, ignorance is encouraged, tradition substituted in place of revelation, will-worship and ceremonies instead of holiness. Thus, by darkening and obscuring the true light, way is made for Antichrist's appearing. Next, under the sixth trumpet, the Turks are loosed as a scourge on the Antichristian world, till the seventh and the vials brought about a reformation; and the light of truth, long obscured, began to dawn upon a benighted world.

We shall now attempt to give a particular explication of the different trumpets in order.

Verse 7. Upon sounding the first trumpet, there followed fire, and hail mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth, &c. This is in allusion, perhaps, to the plagues of Egypt. We have often seen fire and hail, as it were, mingled together in a thunder storm: when the cloud is raised very high in the air, the cold congeals the particles of water into hailstones, and the electrical fire bursting through the cloud, causes these pour down with great violence. But how blood, in a natural way, can be mixed with
these

these, (except in their effects), we cannot comprehend. However, when applied in a spiritual sense to the church, we can easily perceive the qualities of these three in the same person. Hail not only shews, as was said, intense coldness in the air; but its nature is very pernicious and destructive to the fruits of the earth. So a person who has deviated from the truth, and embraced some erroneous opinions, his affections towards God and his neighbour become cold as ice; and his darling errors are so rivetted in his mind, that he is, as it were, influenced with passion, and burns with fury and indignation against every one who is of a different opinion from himself, especially against those who adhere to the truth. That coldness of affection to God and his neighbour gradually produceth a fixed and rooted hatred against both; and, because he cannot wreck his vengeance immediately against his Maker, he turns it, with unrelenting fury, against all that bear his image. As this person bears the image of the devil, who was a murderer from the beginning, so he delights to shed the blood of those that are dear to God. Thus an heretic is cold in his affection to God, hot and fiery in his zeal against good men, because they differ from him; and cruel and bloody in his disposition against the upright, as his father the devil.

This dreadful storm is said to be cast upon the earth: by which, we conceive, is meant, either the visible church, which is attacked and defaced, in her plainest and clearest truths, as in chap. vii. 1.; or we may understand here, the foundations of such truths, to which the utmost credit should be given, and without which the visible church cannot exist; as that concerning the Person, Natures, and Offices of Christ. We may observe, that in the Heathen world, chap. vi. and in the Antichristian world, chap. xvi. earth signifies
their

their foundations; so in this place, confessing Christ, and adhering to his sure doctrines, is called the foundation or rock on which the church is built. Or, finally, it may signify the spreading of plagues over the whole face of the earth.

The effect of these being cast upon the earth, is, that a third part of trees, and all green grass are burnt up. By trees, in the Christian church, is, doubtless, meant professors eminent for gifts and abilities, or for their high stations, like trees, taller than the rest. The grass too is burnt up; that is, great and small are carried away with the torrent: yet only a third part of trees are consumed; importing, that many great and good men were kept free from the infection.

Now, when we come to apply this judgment, or storm, we shall have different opinions: some apply it to the heresies, above mentioned, of Arius, &c.; others, to Antichrist's rise; others, to the irruption of the Goths and Vandals: lastly, some apply it to the condition of the church at that time, in conjunction with all the other three; which we think is the most probable conjecture.

We can by no means agree with Bishop Newton, who applies all the plagues threatened by the trumpets to the Roman empire; not that we suppose they cannot be applied to it at all, we rather think, that they are applicable to it only in a secondary sense, as being connected with the church. However, we shall favour our readers with his elegant paraphrase.

“ At the sounding of the first trumpet, verse 7. he says, the barbarous nations, like a storm of hail and fire mingled with blood, invade the Roman territories: and destroy the third part of trees, that is, the trees of the third part of the earth; and the green grass, that is both old and young, high and low, rich and poor, together. Theodosius the Great died in the year 395; and

no sooner was he dead, than the Huns, Goths, and other barbarians, like hail for multitude, and breathing fire and slaughter, broke in upon the best provinces of the empire, both in the east and west, with greater success than they had ever done before. But by this trumpet I conceive, says he, were principally intended, the irruptions and depredations of the Goths, under the conduct of the famous Alaric, who began his incursions in the same year 395; first ravaged Greece, then wasted Italy, besieged Rome, and was bought off at an exorbitant price; besieged it again in the year 410, took and plundered the city, and set fire to it in several places. Philostorgius, who lived in and wrote of these times, saith, that the sword of the barbarians destroyed the greatest multitude of men; and, among other calamities, dry heats, with flashes of flame, and whirlwinds of fire, occasioned various and intolerable terrors; yea, and hail, greater than could be held in a man's hand, fell down in several places, weighing as much as eight pounds. Well, therefore, might the prophet compare these incursions of the barbarians to hail and fire mingled with blood. Claudian, in like manner, compares them to a storm of hail, in his poem on this very war. Jerome also saith, of some of these barbarians, that they came on unexpectedly every where; and, marching quicker than report, spared not religion, nor dignities, nor age, nor had compassion on crying infants; those were compelled to die who had not yet begun to live. So truly did they destroy the trees and the green grass together."

Errors of all kinds paved the way for Antichrist, who took every opportunity to advance his worldly grandeur; and Rome, by its situation and greatness, had prodigious influence in all dissensions, and acted as an umpire among them.

But,

But, so long as the empire continued, he was prevented from usurping the power which he did afterwards; when that let, as the apostle calls it, was removed.

However, most commentators think the Arian and Macedonian heresies, with their attendants, are chiefly applicable to this trumpet: because, as we said above, these errors immediately succeeded that calm the church had enjoyed in the reign of Constantine. They also agree well with it; for, as we observed, they sapped the most fundamental truths of Christianity, viz. the divinity of the Second and Third Persons of the adorable Trinity. Christ saith, Matth. xvi. "Upon this Rock," viz. his Divinity, "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it:" so that the denying this, is shaking the very foundations of religion: and this storm was so violent, that the church was almost ruined by it. Several whole synods took part with Arius; and though Constantine seriously expostulated with particular bishops, and many synods, about it, yet it could not be removed.

This also occasioned several violent and bloody persecutions by Constantius, Valens, and other Arian emperors; likewise by the Vandals in Africa. Several emperors and kings embraced this error or of Arius: the synod of Tyre condemned Athanasius, under pretence of turbulency, murder, and adultery; though his opposition to this error was his only crime. The synod of Antioch, anno 337, deposed Eustachius the bishop, under the like prettexts. Also, the council of Millan, anno 334, condemned many great and good men, because they would not subscribe to the condemnation of Athanasius.

Many remarkably pious men, through weakness, and the violence of persecution, were in a

manner compelled to comp'y with the rest in condemning Athanasius ; as Liberius bishop of Rome, and Osius bishop of Corduba, who, after suffering long for the truth, at last owned it. This storm and defection became almost universal ; so that the whole world were some how carried away with it. The barbarous nations that broke into the empire, both in Italy and Africa, were mostly Arian ; and doubtless were sent as a scourge upon that backfiddened church.

As the church of Rome continued longer pure than any of the rest, many persecuted members and churches applied to her for protection : also heretics, when condemned, had recourse to Rome, viz. Eutiches, Donatus, and many others in Africa ; all which tended to exalt that church above the rest, and prompt her to encroach on others. In order to screen honest men from the unjust oppression of the bishops of the east, several acts of synods were passed, whereby many resorted from the east to Rome, to hear the disputes about the differences that happened there.

The emperor removing the seat of empire from Rome to Constantinople, was also very favourable for her temporal advancement ; as his power in the west began to diminish, he granted great favours to the bishop of Rome, in order to support his interest there : also, by his managing prudently in all the disputes that came before him, he became eminent, and much admired ; though, at this time, he pretended no authority over other bishops, yet, by insinuating himself gradually into favour, he soon acquired a superiority over the rest : by all which, we may evidently see, how suitable the events were to the type.

How amazing is it, that men should be so grossly stupid, as to deny the plainest and most evident truths recorded in sacred writ ! Surely, the divinity

nity of Christ is as perspicuous as any other mentioned in Scripture, and yet, even at this day, it is called in question, by our modern Socinians and Freethinkers. How watchful ought, then, the ministers of the everlasting gospel to be, lest this and other errors should gain ground, and our national church, which has long been the boast of all others, for purity of worship, and strictness of discipline, should share the fate of the ancient churches; who, by apostatizing from the truth, are now utterly forsaken of God.

Verse 8. "The second angel sounded, and as it were, a great mountain burning with fire, was cast into the sea, and the third part of the sea became blood," &c.

What we are to understand by a mountain, other places of holy writ will make appear; Zech. iv. 7. "What art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubabel, thou shalt become a plain." It is evident the Persian monarchy is here figuratively called a mountain; Babylon is also called a destroying or burning mountain; therefore, by mountain, in this place, must be understood some illustrious men in the church, who are office-bearers, that sit and act in her judicatories. Our blessed Lord said, of his disciples and ministers, that they were as a city set upon a hill, Matth. v. These are fitly compared to mountains, in comparison of the ignorant vulgar, in the same manner as legislators, and civil governors in a state. But this mountain is said to be burning with fire; this, as was observed above, is the fire of contention, and pride of ecclesiastics, fired with ambition and thirst of power, and eagerly contending for preferments. Who can suppose, that men, in such a ferment, will have any regard to piety, holiness, or truth? Therefore, errors and factions may be expected to spread far and wide, and to infect many with their pernicious poison; and in-

sensibly pave the way for the appearance of anti-christ.

Again, this burning mountain is said to be cast into the sea, that is, in scripture-language, among a numerous people; as in *Is. x. 22, 11. 5. Hos. i. 10. Rom. ix. 27. Rev. xvii. 15.* and many other places: that is, this infection spread, and diffused its baneful influence amongst a great number of people; even beyond sea, as in Africa, Rome, and the western part of the empire, as the former was mostly upon the earth, or eastern empire. In this prophetic book, sea is also to be understood of the public ordinances, worship, discipline and government of the church; because, in and by these, Christians have fellowship with each other, as persons trade and traffic with one another in distant countries, beyond seas, by shipping. In the 18th chapter of this book, the Anti-christian world, or Popish priests, are compared to merchants carrying on traffic in ships for the souls of men; that is, receiving money to pray them out of Purgatory.

We observed formerly, that error made rapid progress in the church, and the purity of doctrine began to decline: schisms took place, people out of pride, and, under pretence of the unholiness of many members, now began to separate from the church, especially the western part of the world, which formerly was purest; now also they began to mix human inventions with the preaching of the word: thus church government went into confusion, pride destroyed all, and rendered it contemptible.

Next, the waters were turned into blood, that is, they were corrupted, in allusion to the plague of Egypt; the church, thus rent and torn by divisions, (her discipline weakened, her ordinances spoiled, and their nature changed,) lost that beauty and splendor in her judicial capacity, which was
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her greatest ornament; her synods, councils, and clergy, in many parts, were so polluted and depraved, that their doctrine and canons tended rather to destruction than edification; so that many poor ignorant people were ruined, as in ver 9. The third part of the creatures in the sea, and in ships, died, *viz.* a spiritual death: the pure streams of spiritual or divine life are so polluted with senseless ceremonies, human inventions, and traditions, that have no spiritual nourishment in them, but like pure streams mixed with poisonous drugs, kill all who drink thereof.

Finally, By the blowing of the second trumpet; and its effects, we are given to understand, that church-governors were become so vicious, puffed up with pride and ambition, that they paid no regard to the clearest dictates of Revelation; but eagerly grasped at power, which they exercised not for edification, but for the destruction of those under their care: by which the church lost her excellence and authority, and sunk low like a burning mountain, which the fire in its own bowels is gradually consuming; whereby many dreadful effects, dishonourable to God, and pernicious to the members of the church, followed.

As a just punishment for this apostacy, Bishop Newton says, "That next to Alaric and his Goths, were Attila and his Huns; who, for the space of fourteen years, as Sigonius says, shook the east and west, with the most cruel fear, and deformed the provinces of each empire with all kind of plundering, slaughter, and burning. They first wasted Thrace, Macedon, and Greece, putting all to fire and sword; and compelled the eastern emperor, Theodosius II. to purchase a shameful peace. Then Attila turned his arms against the western emperor, Valentinian the third; entered Gaul with seven hundred thousand men, and, not content with taking and spoiling, set most
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of the cities on fire : but, at length, being there vigorously opposed, he fell upon Italy, took and destroyed Aquileia, with several other cities, slaying the inhabitants, and laying the buildings in ashes ; and filled all places between the Alps and Appenines with flight, depopulation, slaughter, and servitude, burning, and desperation. He was preparing to march to Rome, but was diverted from his purpose, by a solemn embassy from the emperor, and the promise of an annual tribute ; and so, concluding a truce, retired out of Italy, and passed into his own dominions beyond the Danube. Such a man, might properly be compared to a great mountain burning with fire, who really was, as he called himself, the scourge of God, and the terror of men ; and boasted that he was sent into the world by God for this purpose, that, as the executioner of his just anger, he might fill the earth with all kind of evils ; and he bounded his cruelty and passion by nothing less than blood and burning."

We shall next attempt to fix the time, a little more particularly, when these events happened ; after the council of Nice, as was said, quarrels and dissensions, broke out among the clergy, and episcopacy began to take place. In succeeding councils or assemblies, the precedency of some sees was established, and a foundation of ecclesiastical hierarchy was laid. The council of Nice appointed four patriarchs ; One at Alexandria, in Egypt ; another at Jerusalem, in Syria ; a third at Antioch, in Asia ; a fourth at Rome ; and some add ; a fifth, at Constantinople. These were to preside over the metropolitans, or archbishops, who yet were all independant in their own bounds, as is evident from canon sixth. After this, Rome got the preference, and Constantinople became second ; not from any intrinsic dignity in themselves, but because they were the two capitols of the empire ;

pire ; this is evident from canon third, of the second assembly at Constantinople, confirmed by the 28th canon of the council of Chalcedon, and the 36th canon of the council of Trulos ; where Constantinople is made second to Rome, because it was denominated new Rome, and had the same civil privileges with the old. From this time Rome took every opportunity to claim the supremacy ; and was much assisted in it, both by these decrees, and the resort of many who desired to have that bishop of their party ; who had great weight in settling controversies among other churches, and assumed to himself a power over them ; also contended, that the churches of the east, and in Africa, ought, in all controverted points, to appeal to him. This is clear from their letters to the council of Antioch, and proposals made to the council of Chalcedon, but more particularly, by their letters and messages to that of Carthage ; where we may see, that Appiarius, bishop of Sica, justly censured by the council of Carthage, appealed to the bishop of Rome ; and three other bishops successively, so far owned the appeal, as to admit the condemned person into their communion ; and sent commissioners to the sixth council of Carthage, consisting of 217 bishops, among whom was Augustine, commanding them to repeal their former sentence : they pretended, they were authorized, by the council of Nice, to act as arbiters to all others, and that any bishop had a right, by that council, to appeal to them. The members of this assembly, suspecting the truth of their allegation, sent messengers to Antioch, Alexandria, and Constantinople, for authentic copies of the canons of said council, but found no such acts in them for Rome's supremacy. However, they had not yet arrived at that height of audacity, to alledge divine right in their favour, to a superiority over others ; yet even then

church.

church-power was abused, by the pride and ambition of their clergy; and, on account of the former heresy, a foundation was laid for the bishops of Rome, to take encouragement to prosecute their supremacy; and on which they continued to rear it up, till it came to its height.

By all which we may observe, how pernicious this dispute was to the church, and how much it contributed, in the event, to the advancement of Antichrist; which is the particular plague meant in the trumpets, and therefore properly comprehended under the second, as agreeing with the type, time, and other reasons assigned in application of the former trumpet.

Verse 10. 11. Upon the third angel sounding, a great star is said to fall from heaven, burning as it were a lamp. By star, according to chap. i. 20. we are to understand some minister or ministers of the church visible; who having a borrowed light from Christ, should communicate it to others: this great star is like a lamp burning, which means some one, remarkable for great abilities, or in high vogue for pretended holiness; having a mighty appearance of religious sanctity, but knowing nothing of the life and power of it; blazing as it were with a counterfeit light, like a lamp, which receives not its light from the sun, as the stars do. This star falls from heaven; that is, he makes a defection from the church, which in scripture language is called heaven; he deviates from the purity of the gospel, and corrupts the fountains of water; that is, he introduceth some new error into the church, which shall be observed as we proceed.

This star is called wormwood; a bitter herb, embittering every thing that mixeth with it; which, according to Deut. xxix. 18. denotes a person or family that departeth from God, to worship idols; Simon Magus is said to be in the
gall.

gall of bitterness, for his unworthy thoughts of the grace of God, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, which he thought to purchase with money. Thus it renders the fountains bitter, by introducing free will, the falling away of the saints, the inefficacy of grace, the doctrine of merit, predestination upon foreseen good works or faith; whereby the pure wholesom doctrines of the gospel are poisoned; or rather, these poisonous and pernicious errors introduced in their room, by which many are ruined. For it is said to fall into, and embitter a third part of the rivers: as if he had said, though these destructive errors may be greedily swallowed up by great numbers of people, yet a total defection from truth shall not take place; and though many died, yet a remnant shall be saved, as Paul said of the Jews.

The application of this, we suppose, may refer to some great defection in the church; by some person or persons of great abilities, of more than ordinary eloquence, appearing to argue agreeable to reason, and pretending the strictest regard to morality: hence it is different from the former in several respects. 1. As it more immediately affects the free grace of the gospel. 2. In the manner; for there is no blood nor persecution in this, as in the former two: here Satan appears as an angel of light, introducing error, by means of his agents, under the mask of the strictest holiness. 4. It falleth not on the earth, as in chap. ix. 1. because that star is not yet arrived at its height; here it has the epithet of Great given it, but in the 9th chapter it is called simply a star, having lost much of its brightness by its first fall; for it is probably the same fall, begun under this trumpet, and finished under the fifth.

It may be naturally supposed, this trumpet succeeded the former in point of time; when the bishops of Rome were quarreling with the clergy
of

of the east; and those of Africa, to advance their supremacy; this happened near about the 400. In the fifth century, many gross heretics made their appearance, such as Pelagius in the year 413; Nestorius, in the 429; Eutiches, about the 449; besides many others, who were all favoured by the great men of the empire; and even the emperor Anastatius himself favoured Eutiches, in preference to Flavianus. Though many great and good men opposed these errors, yet they made a rapid progress in the world. As piety and regard to truth declined, errors grew up apace; viz. wrong notions about sanctification, the possibility of fulfilling the law, observing of holy days, &c. This star, corrupting fountains and streams insensibly, did not so directly attack the foundations, as the former heresies had done; but acknowledging the doctrine of the Trinity, and right with respect to the person of Christ, as Gregorius Roma did, but mistook the nature and execution of his offices. This star, addeth to, and mixeth something with truth, yet such as altereth the very nature of it; such as, the popish additions of merit, penances, indulgencies, mediators, and intercessions of saints, and angels, &c. Pelagius and his train of errors, are, doubtless, typified here; as agreeing not only to the type, but in time, for he began about the year 405, or, as some say, the year 415.

This was a man of the greatest natural abilities, and once thought to be eminently pious, and zealous for the truth; the nature of his heresy was different from the former: he secretly undermined the nature of Christ's offices, and endeavoured to render them of no effect. This error spread amazingly in many parts of the world, yet many testified against it, as Augustine, Hieronymus and others; the church of Rome embraced, and still tenaciously continues, most of these errors.

It

It would far exceed the bounds we design for this essay, should we endeavour to confuse all the errors we have already mentioned, and others that will be afterwards spoke of. We shall only select a few; and, by shewing the absurdities of them, the rest may be easily guessed at. The first we shall take notice of, is that of merit; and certainly (says Mr Stephens, in his first sermon, preached before the British factory, at Oporto in Portugal,) "There cannot be a more gross error, in the spiritual computation I have hitherto treated of, than to imagine, that God is thus a debtor to frail and sinful man; or that our imperfect obedience of so short a duration, (when the whole and utmost of our service is matter of duty, none of which we can discharge without divine assistance), should, by its intrinsic worth and excellence, bear an equivalent proportion to an eternity of the most consummate happiness."

The prophet, in a strong allusion, describes our righteousness as filthy rags; and we are told, and sadly experience it in ourselves, "that in many things we offend all," are at best unprofitable servants; and therefore might justly be cast into everlasting outer darkness. Where then, (to use the words of the apostle, Rom. iii. 27) is boasting? It is excluded by the law of faith; that is, the whole tenor of the gospel. What then can be more absurd, as well as profane, than this conceited presumption of the Romans? It is, as if a freely pardoned criminal should demand the highest favours of his prince, to whom, by soul rebellion, he had forfeited his life. Indeed thro' our Saviour's satisfaction, we have a right and title to the celestial inheritance, as a forgiven offender may have to whatever is included in his pardon: yet still eternal life is a gracious gift and promise, to be claimed solely by our Saviour's merits, not our own; neither is this doctrine of merit only

an instance of spiritual pride, but of injustice and ingratitude to God; men hereby disown the highest obligations, sacrilegiously rob many of the divine attributes of the honour due to them, dispare and trample upon infinite clemency, and invade heaven by a kind of gigantic violence: what fatal influence it has on religion is notorious. Nevertheless this foul corruption is strenuously abetted by the Romish church; and no wonder, since as it is a gainful notion, (it being one of the inexhaustible mines from which their revenues are supplied, and a great part of the foundation on which their religious houses are generally erected), so it is a successful state-engine for carrying on the Papal tyranny and usurpation: for, (with horror be it spoken), the most scandalous breach of faith, and violation of oaths, the most bloody assassinations and massacres, having been sanctified by their Popes, and termed meritorious, (who have also canonized as martyrs, those who fell by the hands of justice, in such flagitious attempts), there never will be wanting instruments, who, excited by the same views, will be ready to engage themselves in the like abominable practices.

After saying so much on the absurdity of merit, it would be to no purpose to weary our readers, with their still more ridiculous notion of supererogation, or doing more than the law of God requires.

The learned bishop Newton, again, in his usual manner, applies this trumpet to Genseric king of the Vandals, who invaded Italy with an army of 300,000 men.

Verse 12. 13. "And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten," &c. We have seen the former three trumpets, successively contributing to promote the interest of Antichrist. In ver. 12. two things are to be observed,

1. The sun, moon, and stars are smitten. 2. The fatal effects that follow: the day shone not for a third part thereof, and the night also, because the luminaries that give light were all darkened. By sun, moon, and stars, is surely meant, the light and purity of the gospel and its ordinances, as Psal. cxix. 105. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light to my path;" and 2 Pet. i. 19. We have a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well to take heed, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts. Malach. iv. 2. "The sun of righteousness shall arise," &c. Many more places might be mentioned, were it necessary: the church is said to be fair as the moon, her ministers are compared to stars, who borrow their light from the Sun of righteousness; and the beauty of the church is predicted in these words: "The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun as the light of seven days." Now, seeing these lights, in the vision, are said to be smitten, so that a third part is darkened; we may fairly conclude, that the pure doctrines of the word are now corrupted; that the simplicity of worship, and the practical power of godliness, were bartered for human traditions: yet only a third part is smitten; which shews us, that still many adhered to the truth, which was very different under the the following trumpet, when it is wholly darkened. It does not appear that any new errors are introduced by this trumpet, no more than by the fifth; only they are more universally received in this and the following, till almost the whole world are plunged into a deep abyss of ignorance, error, and superstition.

We are inclined to apply this to the sixth century; because, in that age, the light of the gospel was prodigiously obscured, though not so much

as afterwards, in the following ages. History does not inform us of any new heresies broached, though the former were all eagerly adhered to; yet though there was no new heresy or heretic, there was a general falling off from the simple purity of doctrine, worship, government, and practice. Monasteries were then erected, superstitious days observed, the doctrine of good works, and traditions, increased; the marriage-bed, which, in sacred writ, is said to be honourable, began to be neglected, even by great personages, from a mistaken zeal for devotion.

“ No protestant, who travels through Popish countries, says Mr Stephens, can be so careless an observer, as not to remark the grievous burden they groan under, by reason of their numerous monasteries; of which purgatory, and prayers for the dead, laid the first stone; and both raised and supported their grandeur, to the turning the greatest part of their wealth unto unprofitable, and often impure channels; which not only deprives the state of many useful members, but renders them dependent on a foreign power: and, lastly, brings on them a dearth of legitimate offspring; which is an evil, that every body politic (and more especially, Britain) ought to guard against, as much as against famine and pestilence.

How ought we then to admire the wisdom and justice of Protestants, in pulling down pretended houses of prayer, degenerated into dens of thieves; and seizing upon wealth, the revenue of cheat and imposture; and, like false coin, regularly forfeited to government: thus we can never sufficiently value our happiness, in being delivered from the devouring swarms of these religious drones, and should ever thankfully adore the divine Goodness; which completed, and settled our reformation, upon the most solid basis, and put it into the hearts of legislators, to secure these
glorious

glorious privileges, by repeated acts of parliament, in favour of the Protestant, and to check the growth of the Popish religion in Britain."

One circumstance is remarkable in this age, mentioned above, and tends to confirm, not only the truth of what has been already said, but of what soon happened after. John Bishop of Constantinople, by the consent of Mauritius the emperor, and the bishops of the east; assumed to himself, the title of Universal Bishop and Patriarch: Gregory, bishop of Rome, gives us a particular account of this, and, what effect had it on religion. "There was a great decay, says he, of zeal and humanity among the clergy, by their being too much immersed in worldly pursuits." He reckoned the title of universal bishop, a certain infallible sign, or mark, of Antichrist; claiming to himself superiority over all other bishops, which none of the apostles, no, not even Peter, attempted to do. "This, said he, is a sure sign, that Antichrist is near; since a priest so exalted himself, and has an army of priests ready to advance him, and bend their necks under his yoke: for, what is Antichrist's exalting himself, above all that is called God, in this world, and sitting in his temple as God, but a priest lifting up himself above all his fellow priests; which is, to assume Christ's chair."

It is somewhat surprising, that the successors of this same bishop, a few years after, should have paid no regard to this famous prediction, and warning, of one of their own predecessors. This plainly shews us, that the designs of God shall be accomplished; and the very wrath of man shall praise him.

As we have frequent reason, to mention the word Antichrist, in this essay, we shall here, once for all, give our readers a definition of it, according as it has been understood by the church, from

the earliest times; and, according as the eminently learned Bishop Hurd defines it, in his seventh sermon, page 215. "The word Antichrist, says he, stands for a person or power, actuated with a spirit opposite to that of Christ; and so the apostle John, 1. epist. iv. 3. explains it; For speaking of certain false teachers, who preached up a doctrine contrary to that of the gospel, he says, "This "is that spirit of Antichrist, whereof ye have "heard that it should come, and even now already is in the world." And I lay the greater stress on this observation, because the etymology of the word, Antichrist, makes it capable of two different meanings: For it may either signify, one in the place and office of Christ, or, one who maintains a direct enmity and opposition to him; but the latter is the sense in which the apostle useth this term; although it be true, that in the former sense, it very well suits the bishop of Rome, who calls himself, the Vicar of Christ, as well as the successor of St Peter. Nor can there be any difficulty in fixing the charge of Antichristianism, in the sense of an enmity and opposition to Christ, on the Roman Pontiff; (though I know how absurd the attempt seems to writers on that side); for, to merit this charge, it is not necessary, that he should formally reject Christ, which undoubtedly he does not, but that he should act in defiance to the true genius, and character of Christ's religion; a charge, which may evidently be made good against him. In short, as the word Christ, is used frequently, in the apostolic writings, for the doctrines of Christ; in which sense we are said to put on Christ, and to learn Christ, and in other instances: so Antichrist, in the abstract, may be taken, for a doctrine subversive of the Christian; and when applied to a particular man, or body of men, it denotes one, who sets himself against the spirit of that doctrine.

In this last sense, the word Antichrist is clearly meant by St John; and from his example, the word grew into general use in the church, and is to be understood, whenever mention is made of Antichrist by the primitive fathers, or any other ecclesiastical writers."

The Bishop proceeds to shew in what manner the prophecies have been construed, and applied, by many eminent members of the Christian church in all ages. He first proves, in a very strong and clear manner, that Antichrist was not applied to Heathen, but to Christian Rome. In the second place, he shews, that the papal power is that very Antichrist, and that it began to make its appearance in the sixth century, and gradually increased, till it came to its height. In order to confirm this, he quotes some of the Romish clergy, particularly at the synod of Rheims, held in the tenth century: " Arnulphus bishop of Orleans, applied to the whole council, Whether the bishop of Rome were not the Antichrist of the prophets, sitting in the temple of God, and perfectly corresponding to the marks St Paul had given of him?" In particular, speaking of John the fifteenth, who then governed the Roman church, he apostrophised the assembly in these words: " What think ye, reverend Fathers, of this man? seated on a lofty throne, and shining in purple and gold? Whom do ye account him to be? Surely, if destitute of charity, and puffed up with the pride of science only, he is Antichrist, sitting in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

In the beginning of the eleventh century, Berengarius, a man of principal note in those days, and distinguished for his free writings concerning the Eucharist, went so far, as to call the church of Rome, the seat of Satan.

During this, and the following century, the
bishop

bishop produceth the authorities of John Aventinus; Fludentius, bishop of Florence; and the whole church of Liege; also, St Bernard, the most eminent person of that age.

King Richard the I. of England, in his way to the holy land, hearing of the learned Abbot Joachim of Calabria, had the curiosity to hear a lecture from him, in which he expressed much satisfaction." Then he mentions the Waldenses, or, Albigenes; and several others we shall have occasion to take notice of, in what follows.

Bishop Newton, in his usual manner, applies this fourth trumpet to the western part of the Roman empire. Hear his own words, " by the sun, moon, and stars, (says he), are meant the great lights of the Roman empire; they are eclipsed and darkened, and remain in darkness for some time. Genseric left the Roman empire in a weak and desperate condition. It struggled hard, and gasped as it were for breath, through eight short and turbulent reigns, for the space of twenty years; and at length expired, in the year 476, under Momylus, or Augustulus as he is named in derision. This change was effected by Odoacer king of the Heruli; who coming to Rome with an army of barbarians, stripped Momylus of the imperial robes, put an end to the very name of the western empire, and caused himself to be proclaimed king of Italy. His kingdom, indeed, was of no long duration; for after a reign of sixteen years, he was overcome and slain, in the year 493, by Theodoric king of the Ostrogoths, who founded the kingdom of the Ostrogoths in Italy; which continued about sixty years under his successors. Thus was the Roman sun extinguished in the western empire; but the other lesser luminaries, the moon and stars, still subsisted; for Rome was still allowed to have her senate, and consuls, and other subordinate officers

cers as before. Odoacer, at first suppressed them; but after two or three years restored them again. Theodoric changed none of the Roman institutes; he retained the senate, consuls, and patricians, and all the ancient magistrates, and committed these offices only to Romans. These lights, we may suppose, shone more faintly under barbarian kings, than under Roman emperors; but they were not totally suppressed and extinguished, till after the kingdom of the Ostrogoths was destroyed, by the emperor of the east's lieutenants, and Italy was made a province of the eastern empire. Then was Longinus sent in the year 566, by the emperor Justin II. to govern Italy with absolute authority: and he changed the whole form of the government, abolished the senate and consuls, and all the former magistrates in Rome and Italy; and, in every city of note, constituted a new governor, with the title of duke. He himself presided over all, and residing at Ravenna, and not at Rome, he was called, the Exarch of Ravennah, as were also his successors in the same office. Rome was degraded to the same level with other places; and from being the queen of cities, and empress of the world, was reduced to a poor dukedom, and made tributary to Ravenna, which she had used to govern.

Verse 13. John beholds an angel flying through the midst of heaven, crying woe, woe, woe, three woes, according to the number of the trumpets yet to sound; which denote three dreadful plagues to follow; as will be seen.

No doubt, as our Saviour denounced woes to the cities that despised his gospel, these, in like manner, are denounced against a benighted world, sunk in sensuality, ignorance, and superstition; as also, to give warning to his church, of the dreadful trials they were to meet with: there is a natural gradation in all the trumpets
and

and vials, as well as of the seals; so that the last always exceeded those that went before, in some awful judgments, either upon the church or her enemies. When they despise the gospel, and receive not the truth in the love of it, they provoke God to give them up to strong delusions to believe a lie. Notwithstanding, God gives his people warning, before hand, of the judgments he is about to send, that they may be upon their guard, and the wicked left without excuse.

On this verse, bishop Newton remarks, that as the foregoing trumpets relate chiefly to the downfall of the western empire, the two following relate chiefly to the downfall of the eastern. The foregoing are described more succinctly, and contain a less compass of time; the following are set forth with more particular circumstances, and are of longer duration, as well as of larger description.

C H A P. IX.

Verse 1.—12. We see the fifth angel sounding, and the awful effects that follow. Here, as in the former, a star falls from heaven; but this fall is more dreadful than the former, for he receives the key of the bottomless pit. The Christian world is, doubtless, the object of this judgment, upon whom the effects of the former trumpets fell; for the last three denote greater degrees of wrath upon those who had despised and abused the former lesser woes. Again, the Christian world is obscured by the trumpets, and the Antichristian world succeeds in its place; for after the sixth trumpet, when the vials begin to be poured out, the Antichristian world is still in being; it must therefore have existed under the trumpets, and particularly under the immediate foregoing ones: and it is at its height under the seventh; therefore the true church was declining

declining under the trumpets, whilst the Antichristian was coming into existence ; for these two worlds cannot exist together.

Seeing then that the church is the object of this plague, and Antichrist increasing under these trumpets, and chiefly under this, as this is a farther advancement of the same kind of plague, and the sixth plagueth idolatrous Antichrist, then at his height, he must therefore be growing here. Further, this can be no temporal judgment, as the sixth trumpet is ; for then it would not so far exceed the woes of that kind, as we observed. Again, the locusts are mentioned here like horses ; yet they are not really horses, as in the sixth, but having something of their nature. Their power is to hurt, not to kill, as they do in the sixth trumpet. Also the servants of God who were sealed, are freed from this plague, though they are not exempted from temporal afflictions ; as appears from chap. xi. nor from the devastations of the Saracens, who made havce of all alike. Though these may appear sufficient to shew, that the Saracens cannot be solely meant here ; yet we shall add another, which we think still stronger than any of the former. This angel is said to fall from heaven : but how can Mahomet and his Saracens be said to fall from heaven, seeing he never was a member of the visible church ; this will, however, apply well to the Pope, who, with propriety, may be said to fall from heaven, when he fell of from the purity and simplicity of the gospel.

Further we maintain, that the rise and discovery of Antichrist, and the bishop of Rome falling from heaven to earth ; though at first they came not to their full height, is the thing predicted here ; because the beasts mentioned in chap. xiii. must be understood of Antichrist, particularly in his rise, as shall be made appear afterwards.

afterwards. But the war, both there and here, is differently expressed; the very same persons are also overcome by both, *viz.* the unsealed ones: again, the same persons are delivered from both, *viz.* the sealed ones, as in chap. ix. 4. chap. xiii. 8. and xiv. 1. ; likewise the number is the same in chap. vii. 14. It is evident the xi. chapter belongs to Antichrist, from verse 7. ; for the witnesses are to be killed by the beast, and what beast can that be, but that which, in chap. xiii. ascendeth out of the bottomless pit, as the locusts do here; and that the xi. chapter belongs to this trumpet, is evident from verse 14. where it is said that the second woe is past, and that the third woe cometh. Then all preceeding that, belong to the first or second woe; but it cannot belong to the second, as has been observed before; therefore it belongs to the first, which, indeed, in this event, is cotemporary with the second or sixth trumpet.

Finally, As the fifth vial is poured on the seat of the beast, so the fifth trumpet sets him on his seat.

We again affirm, if that spiritual defection of the church, under Antichrist, be that storm against which the 144,000 are sealed in chap. vii. then what is comprehended in this trumpet is so also; for both have relation to the same storm: but that is to be understood of Antichrist's reign, chap. 7. as the greatest calamity that could befall the church, after the heathen persecutions; therefore this must be so too.

This spiritual kingdom must either be applied to Antichrist, or some other, (seeing it is some spiritual plague springing up in the church), but the description can agree to no other; and in whom can this spiritual woe be fulfilled, but the kingdom of Antichrist? therefore that must be meant here.

Again,

Again, it is evident, that it is the same church, or world, which is overturned, by the first six trumpets; and it being likewise evident, that the sixth trumpet findeth idolatry in the visible church, which is the world plagued by that trumpet; it then follows, that this falling off to idolatry, which is a character of Antichrist, has increased under this fifth trumpet, immediately preceding it, since it was not during the former.

In the last place, this may be further confirmed, by comparing this 9th chapter with 2 Thess. ii.; by which we may perceive, that the plague mentioned here, is the same spiritual Antichristian delusion foretold there, for they agree in every material circumstance. As 1st, The instrument: there, is one sitting in the temple of God, as having place in the church of Christ; here, is a star falling from heaven, meaning the same thing. 2dly, There, he is called an opposer of God, and the son of perdition; here, he is denominated the destroyer, in opposition to Christ, who is the Saviour: also, in chap. xvii. of this book, he is said to go to destruction; and as Chrysostome said, he is called the son of perdition, because he brings many to destruction, and shall certainly be destroyed himself.

Thirdly, They agree, in respect of those whom they torment, 2 Thess. ii. 10.; it is also those that shall be damned who are carried away with this delusion, whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life, chap. xiii. 4. They are given up to strong delusion, to believe lies; in this place, they are carried away with fornications, idolatries, and other errors, and they cleave so fast to them, that though the sixth trumpet torments them, yet they repent not.

Lastly, That delusion 2 Thess. ii. takes its rise from the devil, verse 9.: and is carried on with mighty signs and wonders. Here it comes from

the bottomless pit, and is carried on by the devil's agent, who has the key thereof, and is not without mighty signs and lying wonders; as is evident from chap. xiii. where the same kingdom is differently described.

In verse 1. A star is said to fall from heaven to earth. By star is meant here, some distinguished church-officer: this is clear from our Lord's own exposition, chap. i. 20. Again, by heaven is understood the visible church, as is frequently done in this book; where Christ, the glorious Head of his church, hath placed apostles, pastors, and teachers; and hath furnished them with heavenly light, for the edification of the saints.

It will then naturally follow, that earth must signify all sensual, devilish, wicked persons, who mind only the profits and pleasures of a present life, and have no communication with Christ the Head. But though once, like a star, they seemed to borrow light from him, yet now they are fallen from heaven to earth; that is, instead of cleaving to Christ, as a branch to the vine, they have embraced the doctrine of devils, as will be seen in the sequel. Now this star, though fallen, still retains the name with the people of the earth, to which he is fallen: nay, they admire, they adore, they worship him, because he has introduced a form of religion suited to their humours; therefore, in chap. xi his followers are called Gentiles, as having again embraced their idolatrous superstitions.

This fallen star had now received keys; not the keys of heaven, which they falsely affirm, but the keys of the bottomless pit. According to sacred writ, a key or keys signify power and authority. It is the prerogative of Christ alone, as the Mediator, to carry the keys of hell and death, as well as of heaven. HE openeth and no man shutteth,

teth, and shutteth and no man openeth. But as the devil has obtained and usurped a kingdom in opposition to his, which, in the sovereign wisdom of God, he is permitted to do, he has delegated that power to this fallen star, to act as his lieutenant or vicegerent on earth; this is evident from chap. xiii. 2. 4. While this star remained in heaven, he had the keys of the kingdom of heaven, under the authority of Christ; but now that he is fallen, he has got keys of another nature, *viz.* of hell or the bottomless pit; and to serve the devil his new master, who employs him, in advancement of ignorance, superstition, and idolatry, on the earth to which he is fallen, for the propagating and spreading of corrupt doctrine; which is said, in 1 Tim. iv. 1. &c. to be a doctrine of devils.

Verse 2. "And he opened the bottomless pit." He, *viz.* the star, or Antichrist, being suffered by God to assume sovereignty and power, for the interest of hell, exerted his utmost efforts to bring out of it superstition and idolatry; where they were formerly confined, since Constantine and the world under him embraced Christianity; now they are again let loose, as appears by the effects that follow: for out of it issues smoke, as the smoke of a furnace; this smoke is explained by its effects, as darkening the sun and air; by which is meant, the obscuring the pure light of revelation, which formerly shone conspicuous in the primitive church. Under the former trumpet, only a third part of light was smitten, by this the whole sun and air are darkened; denoting, a greater degree of deviation from truth, which though begun then, was not come to its height. Such being the case, this smoke can be nothing else but the base superstition of the church of Rome, and her increasing of human traditions and ceremonies, which obscure the

light of truth. It is said to be like the smoke of a great furnace, which darkens the air and sun: so these errors, however similar they are to truth, yet they darken it like a thick smoke, and are as pernicious to the souls of men as smoke is to the eyes.

Verse 3. "And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth." As the locusts destroy the fruits of the earth, and turn a fruitful land into barrenness, so men who propagate error waste and destroy the church. That these locusts are pretended churchmen, is evident from verse 11. where they are said to be in subordination to Abaddon, the king of the bottomless pit. They are said to issue out of the smoke, because corrupt doctrine produceth corrupt teachers; as was the case of Jeroboam's priests, 2 Chron. xi. 14. 15. 2 Tim. iv. 3. 4. "For the time shall come, when they shall not endure sound doctrine; but, after their own lusts, shall they heap up to themselves teachers having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." When error takes place, people choose innovations, in respect of office-bearers, as well as doctrine: and thereby they are inclined to become teachers of strange doctrine, for promoting new tenets. The substance of the prophecy may be thus summed up, that the kingdom of Antichrist shall commence, by some remarkable clergyman falling off from the right exercise of church-power, and become a promoter of the designs of Abaddon, and subservient to him; he shall introduce many ceremonies, errors, and superstitious nonsense into the church; so that swarms of false teachers, and orders of the clergy, like locusts, shall abound, which were never authorized by Christ.

Unto these locusts was power given, as the scorpions

pions of the earth have power. The scorpion is a poisonous insect, or small kind of serpent, somewhat resembling a locust: it is very cunning, and its sting dangerous; a fit emblem of poisonous doctrine. They have a commission and power given them, not from Christ the Head of the church, but from the king of the bottomless pit, who authorises his vicar, the Pope, to establish an order of clergy, who shall act, in all respects, as he shall dictate to them. The Pope issues out his bulls and patents, to erect those different orders into one great hierarchy: all these have their dependence on him; to him alone they owe their existence, and to him only they are obedient.

Before we proceed to the following verses, we hope our readers will not be displeased at a few expressions of king James I. of England, which we shall give in his own words: "By locusts and grasshoppers, says he, understand monks and friars, who seem to flee a little from the earth, but indeed are gorbellied devourers: in locusts you see little, but a mouth to mumble over masses, and a belly to consume; they seized, when time was, upon the meadows, the fat and pleasant parts of the land; and, like grasshoppers, consumed every green, that is, every good thing."

We shall here also add an observation of Mr Guyse, who, with many others, applies this trumpet entirely to the Saracens: "The natural locusts, says he, are said to live the five summer-months, inclusive of May and September; and the way of the Saracens upon the empire was, by incursions only in the summer-seasons; to which their tormenting seems more naturally to refer, during the space of five months, than to the years of their power: by casting the months into days, at 30 days to a month, and then reckon-

ing each day for a year, the amount of which is 150 ; which some suppose to be descriptive of the space of time, from the beginning to the end of these incursions of the Saracens into the empire." And this interpretation has something plausible in it, according to the common scheme of the trumpet-prophecies : for this he refers the reader to Jurieu, Daubuz, Mr Mead, and Dr Moir. " However, says he, it is generally agreed, that the Saracens, in their first expedition, chiefly plundered and ravaged, but, commonly, did not kill those of the Christian nations whom they conquered "

Verse 4. They are commanded not to hurt the grass of the earth. By grass here we are to understand the sealed ones ; as is evident from what follows : " but only those men, who have not " the seal of God in their foreheads."

How this can apply to the Saracens we are at a loss to comprehend : How was it possible for them to know whom God had sealed, and whom not ? Were they divinely inspired, that they could certainly know what was known only to God ? That the Saracens were sent as a scourge upon a backslidden church, we frankly own ; but that no more should be meant by this trumpet-prophecy, we utterly deny. For the commission here is, to hurt only those who had not the seal of God in their foreheads ; now, if we can any how conceive, that the Saracens were endowed with such superlative discernment, or that any historical facts shewed they made any distinction between one kind of people and another, in that case we would cheerfully give up the point ; but, till that be ascertained, we must be allowed to adhere to our former opinion, That these seals, trumpets, and vials, for the most part, belong to the church.

Verse 5. " And it was given to them, that
" they

“ they should not kill them ;” that is, they should not take away their natural life, as the Mahomedan horsemen, in the sixth trumpet, did : this may refer to such as were not sealed, and that he had no power over the sealed ones, to take away their spiritual life. The church of Rome do not even take away life from those whom they condemn as heretics, they deliver them over to the secular arm, to be punished. By five months, some understand the time that locusts live and destroy the fruits of the earth, which is from April to September, as we said above ; but, more properly, it is a time fixed in the counsel of God, which will not be long.

Verse 6. “ Men shall seek death,” &c. This doubtless is meant of the subjects of Antichrist’s kingdom ; for what can more natively occasion anxiety and torment of the mind to them, than the Popish religion, which can never satisfy or quiet a wounded conscience. Is it possible, that all the innumerable ceremonies, holidays, doctrine of merit, uncertainty of grace and salvation, perfection of holiness, fulfilling of God’s law, with the grievous yoke of will-worship and superstition, can quiet a guilty conscience ? What can their penances, pilgrimages, satisfactions, indulgences, invocation of saints and images, avail ? What immense sums of money have been given for masses after death, and to pray the soul out of purgatory, and such like stuff ? History abounds with instances of the comfortless life, and fearful death, of many Papists. Their doctrine pursues men till death, and, after death to torment. Their auricular confession of sin under pain of damnation, their confidence on the pope’s pardon, the priests absolution, their own holiness, or the efficacy of some sacrament, or some idolatrous invention, such as the mass : Are these, or many other such like, of any avail to
quiet

quiet the conscience at death ? Also the terror of purgatory must rack and torment them. The very bare mentioning of these absurdities is enough to satisfy any man of common sense, how senseless and inconsistent, nay, how contrary to the infallible rule of heaven, the Popish religion is. Thus, we have made appear, that they seek death but it flees from them, though their anxiety does not.

Verse 7. The shapes of the locusts are said to be like horses. The horse is a noble animal, full of mettle, agility, and fire ; with what amazing courage does he approach the roaring cannon, and is not dismayed at the glittering of the sword. Gregory, formerly mentioned, calls the priests, that were to usher in Antichrist, *exercitus sacerdotum*. They are fitly compared to horses prepared for battle, on account of their boldness, and alertness, in prosecuting their designs, and for the success that attended them. They had on their heads, as it were, crowns of gold ; intimating their worldly grandeur, and apparent greatness. Thus, they resemble kings in pomp, and armies in strength : this is truly characteristic of the cardinals, bishops, and dignified clergy of the Romish church. They have also faces like those of men : they pretend to be sociable, kind creatures ; by their subtle speeches, and endearing conversation, they insinuate themselves into the good graces of persons in power ; in order to deceive them, to draw them off from the truth, and to allure them to embrace their erroneous tenets.

Verse 8. They are said to have women's hair : women deck and dress their hair with jewels, and other ornaments, to excite men to fall in love with their persons : what a strange mixture do we behold here ; persons resembling horses for strength and courage, at the same time, vainly decking themselves like weak, effeminate women.

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Thus they use every artifice, that the policy of hell can invent, to decoy mankind, and engage them in their snares. " And their teeth, were as " the teeth of lions," with which they devour their prey: so these ravening wolves, when they find their low cunning prevails not, attack, with open fury, all that oppose them: this may probably refer, not only to their destroying the souls of such as embrace their doctrine, but also, their persecuting to death all those who oppose them. The Popish clergy, under pretence of serving God, not only allure, and entice men, to embrace their religion; but also compel them, by fire, sword, and every engine their cunning malice could invent.

Verse 9. These locusts, are said to have breast-plates, as it were, of iron, &c. Breast-plates were, anciently, a kind of defensive armour, to protect the body, against the assaults of swords, darts, javelins, and other missive weapons; so also, the Romish doctors were secured, from the attacks of crowned heads, by the excommunications and thunders of the Vatican; that so long as they hold the keys of heaven and purgatory, (as they pretend), no earthly monarch dare injure them.

Verse 10. They had also tails like scorpions; that is, they fawned and flattered, like dogs, in order to deceive the unwary; such is the case with false teachers, they insinuate themselves into men's favour by flattery and lies. They had likewise stings in their tails; this plainly refers to their erroneous doctrine, which poisons men, as the stings of noxious animals. Again, it is said, they have power to hurt men five months. This was formerly mentioned, ver. 5. and again repeated here, doubtless, with a design to confirm the faith of God's people, in his over-ruling providence,

vidence, that this plague should continue a certain fixed period, and no longer.

Verse 11. These locusts had a king over them: that is, they were to be combined together, under one absolute head, who should have uncontrollable authority over them in all things; and however they might differ among themselves, yet they should have an entire confidence in him. This is exactly applicable to the Pope of Rome, who is not only an independant, temporal monarch, but is also an absolute Pontiff, arrogating to himself, a power over kings, emperors, and all people within his dominions. This king, is called, the Angel of the bottomless pit: that is, he is angel or servant thereof, not the king; therefore it cannot mean the devil here, but one sent by him, with an extraordinary commission: for the devil cannot be said to be sent, but sendeth others; nor can this angel, mean ordinary heretics, or false teachers. This is the same star that fell from heaven, ver. 1. and received the keys of the bottomless pit; and he is the same beast spoken of, chap. xiii. to whom the dragon gives his power, as his viceroy in the church. In 2 Thess. ii. he is said to come after the working of Satan, with signs, &c. Again, he is called Abaddon, and Apollyon, in Greek and Hebrew, a name, in both languages, which signifies the destroyer; a name very suitable to the Pope, who destroyeth both the souls and bodies of men, as was said. This name, perhaps, is given him in both these languages, because he destroys both Jews, and Greeks; and, in process of time, he is to be destroyed by both, as will be seen in chap. xvi. Also, the Lord desires both Jews, and Greeks, to observe this, and to know him by his name.

We have all along applied this trumpet, and its effects, to Popery, and to that kingdom where-
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of the pope is head : we shall now briefly resume some properties of this plague ; and next, make some observations, of the rise, progress, and nature of the Popish hierarchy.

We maintain, that the visible church, and her hypocritical professors, are the objects of this plague ; it is the same Christian world, which is obscured by it, which was weakened by the former trumpets.

Its nature is spiritual : in it the ordinances of spiritual life are vitiated, and rendered pernicious to the souls of men : it extends over the face of the whole visible church, and church-men are its actors, such who had formerly power and authority in the true church ; afterwards, it becomes a spiritual kingdom, and assuming great power and authority, it breeds up, and is supported by, swarms of church-officers, compared to locusts for number and quality.

The time when this kingdom was formally established, was about the year 630, as was formerly observed ; for it succeeded immediately to the fourth trumpet, which continued the history of that time, and immediately precedes the rise of Mahomet. This plague introduceth much corrupt doctrine, and again brings back idolatry into the Christian church.

Let us now survey the Papal kingdom, and we will find, that it subsists under one despotic monarch, of unlimited power ; was begun, and carried on, by men who have marred and defaced the simple truths of our holy religion, and, instead thereof, have introduced idolatry, and errors of various kinds ; which, though agreeable to corrupt nature, are, however, diametrically opposite to the doctrine of free grace, taught in the sacred records.

This Bellarmine was so sensible of, though he was one of the greatest champions for the me-
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rit of good works, that he declared it most safe, to place our whole confidence, in the mercy, and goodness of God; and assigneth this reason for it, "If man, says he, have no merit, why does he trust to it; if he has, (which yet is uncertain), it can do him no harm to flee to the mercy of God." By which assertion, it is easy to perceive how little comfort the doctrine of merit can give to dying persons; it only tends to increase pride and boasting, which the apostle Paul tells us, must be entirely excluded, as in Eph. ii. 9.

We shall next take a view of the number and variety of their religious orders: there are reckoned about thirty-five orders, each whereof contain many thousands, besides their bishops, and dignified clergy. The number of their monasteries, (according to Abstedius, in his chronology), is supposed to amount to 225,044; all which, are authorised by, and depend upon the Pope, and exert their utmost endeavours to support his kingdom, and advance his wicked designs.

Finally, We shall consider more particularly, the rise and public appearance of this kingdom, which we said commenced about the year 600. Though pride and ambition began, soon after the year 300, to infect the clergy, yet none of them attempted to usurp a fixed authority, or the title of universal bishop, till Boniface III. assumed it, about the year 606. From the time Constantine removed the seat of empire to Constantinople, the bishop of that place and the bishop of Rome had many sharp, and almost continual, contests for the superiority. At last, John of Constantinople assumed it, a little before the 600, as is said above: but this was opposed by many bishops; but by none more than by Gregory bishop of Rome, who foretold the rise of Antichrist to be near, on that account. After this, the emperor's army happened to mutiny, and elected Phocas,

a wicked fellow, for their emperor; to him Gregory sent messengers, in a fawning and flattering manner, falsely applying Dan. iv. 25. "That the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will." The emperor easily swallowed this false flattery, and henceforth mightily favoured the bishop of Rome. A few years after, in the pontificate of Boniface, this wicked Phocas published an edict, declaring that Rome was for ever after to be acknowledged the supreme see, and its bishop to have absolute power over all others: this decree Boniface caused to be confirmed, in Lateran council of 62 or 72 bishops. Though opposition was made to him at that time, nor was his superiority acknowledged by the churches of the east, yet he began, even then, to make his public appearance; and that mystery of iniquity, which had long been gaining ground underhand, was now brought to light by that infamous wretch, Phocas.

Afterwards, the light of truth was prodigiously obscured, traditions were introduced, public worship was performed in Latin, the Scriptures were denied to the laity, litanies, liturgies, and masses were introduced, instead of the preaching of the word. Every one who would be esteemed religious, laid out his money in erecting churches and monasteries, and enriching them with liberal donations; worshipping of saints and angels was introduced, and many mediators invented: all this happened in the reign of Vitellianus, about the year 660. Image worship was opposed by Leo, Isaurus, and other emperors of the east; for which they were excommunicated by the pope. Now, he was so firmly seated on the throne, that he censured bishops, and disposed of their bishopricks; he deposed kings, and gave their kingdoms to others, at his pleasure; none daring to say to his infallible holiness,

ness, What doest thou? All these, and many other things too tedious to relate, were atchieved by the Roman pontiffs, under pretence of the strictest piety and devotion; at the same time, he intimidated all, who had the courage to oppose him, with eternal damnation.

From which we may conclude, that the Popish kingdom is the kingdom here mentioned; the pope, the king and angel of the bottomless pit; the Popish clergy, the very locusts and armies; and their doctrine, the very smoke of the pit. This, we hope, will be abundantly evident to every intelligent reader, and to every one in the least acquainted with the sacred records. Whilst the bare mentioning of the errors of that apostate church, is a sufficient confutation of their absurdity; yet, as we go along, we shall now and then give our readers the opinion of some learned men about some of them: for it would far exceed the bounds we have prescribed to our essay, were we to enter into a minute and particular confutation of them all. At present we shall briefly shew the absurdity of the pope's supremacy, in the words of Mr Henry Stephen, Vicar of Malden in Surry. " In the days of our sojourning here, says he, (to use a scripture expression) let every one be extremely careful, lest, regardless of, and growing indifferent to the British liberty, government, and worship, he, by imperceptible degrees, contracts a liking for, and at length becomes so far abandoned to conscience, honour, and common sense, as even to embrace Romish slavery and superstition. Long absence will naturally cool and extinguish the love of our country and religion, as well as any other affection, unless proper fuel be continually administered to revive and support it.

All impressions of this kind, you can never too much guard yourselves against; for so fond are mankind of novelty, so strongly addicted to the imitation

imitation of others, that their curiosity is not greater to visit a foreign region, than is their proneness to imbibe its worst customs and fashions. And the stain is generally so deeply taken, that the colour of life arising from it, is seldom or never after effaced.

The fastidious and falsely delicate distaste to the modes, and even laws of their native country, together with an affected and blind partiality for foreign manners and institutions, are infirmities to which travellers are more especially liable. We run risk of being infected this way in every realm and state, and even among the reformed: but in Popish dominions, the contagion is of the most fatal consequences; and therefore all possible care and caution are requisite, to shun and fly from it. And the better to excite, and preserve in you, a warm and just abhorrence of the Romish religion, which introduces with it tyranny of every sort, as well over mens civil rights, as their minds and consciences, I shall draw as my second and last inference, this irrefragable argument against embracing Popery; namely, That in its nature and principles, it is incompatible with, and entirely overthrows the love of our country; a duty, which is the chief of all the social virtues, and indispensibly enjoined us by reason and revelation.

And this it does, by the doctrine of the pope's supremacy, imposed on all the professors of Popery, as a necessary article of belief; so that whoever dares to disavow it, is branded with the odious name of heretic, liable to be made expire in flames here, and, according to their charitable determination, consigned to an eternity of them hereafter.

The spiritual monarchy of Rome, is a fabric raised and supported by a strain of policy, not to be met with in history; and is a power as tyrannically

nically exercised as groundlessly usurped. It is needless to lead you far into the beaten paths of this argument, or shew at large, that Christ built his church not on St Peter, but the faith (or rather object of the faith) he professed; that all his brethren in the sacred college, were possessed of equal authority with him; our Saviour indeed specifying it to him, to declare the unity of that church, which he intended to erect upon the foundation of the apostles, of which he himself was the chief corner stone: that St Peter granted no peculiar prerogative to the see of Rome, above what he conferred upon other places of his residence; that Jerusalem, not Rome, was the mother-church; and lastly, that in fact, for the first four ages, the popes had jurisdiction only over their own diocese: this common road has been often traced over, and is well known. It is sufficient therefore, and also necessary, for my present design, that, in consequence of what has been above said in this discourse, I observe, how an ecclesiastical supremacy, separate from, and independent on the civil magistrate, is such an invasion of his power, as is utterly unwarranted; and can have no pretence justifiable, either by natural reason or revealed authority. For government being of divine institution, ordained for the happiness and safety of society, this double sovereignty in church and state, could never be the design of providence, since it must inevitably end in division or slavery. Two heads being as monstrous and inconsistent in the body politic, as the natural.

One main end of uniting into societies, is the secure enjoyment of property; which cannot but be violated in any community, in proportion as it is implicitly attached to the see of Rome: and this, not only from the several engines she makes use of in draining kingdoms and states, under her subjection, of immense treasures; but from her

lier, often artfully striking in with the avarice and ambition of princes, and the civil magistrate; who, indeed, it cannot be imagined, would thus tamely yield to a foreign yoke, unless the popes, and their agents, had invited them to share in the plunder of wealth and dominion; while the people, betwixt both, are fleeced and enslaved, and yet made so blind by superstition, as to court and be fond of their chains.

This representation of the pope's supremacy, and its genuine effects, is natural, not drawn beyond the life; and if, in this light, we take a nearer survey of that doctrine, we shall find it, wherever prevailing, to interfere with this grand moral duty, the love of our country. For not only the clergy, being hereby dismembered from the community, are therefore, at best, inspired but with cool and subordinate regards for it; and as men cannot serve two masters, it is easy to judge on which side (should there be any competition) the balance would be least: but the laity also, entirely at the devotion of the confessor, is warmed, not with a true affection towards religion, and the real public interest, but with a false, superstitious, and enthusiastic zeal for pompous ceremonies, and the external grandeur of the church.

From this thread therefore, duely pursued, it is evident, that the outrageous, insupportable, audacious, and impudent breaking in upon the civil government, the papal supremacy, and the doctrines its attendants; that heretics have no right to dominion, nor the most solemnly plighted faith; so that kings may, hereupon, be absolved from their coronation oaths, and not only the allegiance of the subject be made void and disannulled, but that even assassination-plots against the lives of princes, excommunicated by the see of Rome, may and ought to be entered

into: I say it is plain and undeniable, that these avowed articles of the church, some decreed by their councils, all of them put in execution by their popes, and defended by their ablest champions, directly strike at the root of the love of our country, cut off the intercourse of the relative offices, and utterly subvert society; which afford us, therefore, a solid and pious reason for detesting Popery: hence manifestly appearing, not so much a religion, as a flagitious spiritual usurpation and tyranny, triumphing with the spoils of the civil authority; in defiance to the commands of our Saviour, and to the dishonour of his most meek and peaceable, best natured, most humble, and self-denying institution."

Bishop Newton, as usual, applies this trumpet to the rise of Mahomet and his Saracens. "A false prophet, he says, is very fitly typified by a blazing star or meteor. The Arabians, likewise, are properly compared to locusts, not only because numerous armies frequently are so; but also because swarms of locusts often arise from Arabia; and also because in the plagues of Egypt, to which constant allusion is made in these trumpets, the locusts, Exod. x. 13. are brought by an east wind; that is, from Arabia, which lay eastward of Egypt; and also because, in the book of Judges, (vii. 12.) the Arabians are compared to locusts, or grasshoppers, for multitude; for in the original, the word for both is the same. As the natural locusts are bred in pits and holes of the earth, so these mystical locusts are truly infernal, and proceed, with the smoke, from the bottomless pit. It is too, a remarkable coincidence, that at this time the sun and the air were really darkened: for we learn, from an eminent Arabian historian, that in the seventeenth year of Heraclius, half the body of the sun was eclipsed; and this defect continued from the former Tifrin

Tifrin to Haziran, (that is, from October to June), so that only a little of its light appeared.

The seventeenth year of Heracleus coincides with the year of Christ 626, and with the fifth year of the Hegira; and, at this time also, Mahomet was training and exercising his followers, in depredations at home, to fit and prepare them for greater conquests abroad."

It is very remarkable, that about the year 606, Boniface became pope, or universal bishop; and a very few years after, that mighty impostor Mahomet made his appearance. As we have already observed, though this trumpet may be applied to the Saracens, yet not to them alone, though perhaps in some things more literally than to the other; as will be seen in the sequel.

It was commanded them, (ver 4.) "That they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree;" which demonstrates, says the bishop, that these were not natural, but symbolical locusts. The like injunctions were given to the Arabian officers and soldiers. When Yezid was marching with the army to invade Syria, Abubeker charged him with this, among other orders, "Destroy not palm-trees, nor burn any field of corn, cut down no fruit trees; nor do any mischief to cattle, only such as you kill to eat." Their commission is, to hurt only those men who have not the seal of God in their forehead; that is, those who are not the true servants of God, but are corrupt and idolatrous Christians. Now, from history, it appears evident, that those countries of Asia, Africa, and Europe, where the Saracens extended their conquests, the Christians were generally guilty of idolatry, in worshipping of images and saints; and it was the pretence of Mahomet, and his followers, to chastise them for it, and to re-establish the unity of the Godhead. The parts
which

which remained freeſt from the infection, were Savoy, Piedmont, and the ſouthern parts of France; which were afterwards the nurſe-ſes, and habitations, of the Waldenſes and Albigenſes. And it is very memorable, that when the Saracens approached theſe parts, they were defeated with great ſlaughter, by the famous Charles Martel, in ſeveral engagements.

As they were to hurt only the corrupt and idolatrous Chriſtians, ſo they were not to kill, but only to torment; and ſhould bring ſuch calamities upon the earth, as ſhould make men weary of their lives: not that it could be ſuppoſed, that the Saracens would not kill many thouſands, in their incurſions; on the contrary, their angel, (ver. 11.) hath the name of the deſtroyer. They might kill them, as individuals, but ſtill they ſhould not kill them as a political body, as a ſtate, or empire: they might greatly harraſs and torment both the Greek, and the Latin churches; but they ſhould not utterly extirpate the one, or the other. They beſieged Conſtantinople, and even plundered Rome; but they could not make themſelves maſters, of either of theſe capital cities. The Greek empire ſuffered moſt from them, as it lay neareſt to them: they diſmembered it of Syria and Egypt, and ſome other of its beſt and richeſt provinces; but they were never able to ſubdue, and conquer the whole: as often as they attempted it, they were repulſed, and defeated. They attempted it in the year 672, but their men and ſhips were miſerably deſtroyed, by the ſea-fire, invented by Callinicus; and, after ſeven years fruitleſs pains, they were compelled to raiſe the ſiege, and to conclude a peace."

In the 7. 8. 9. 10. verſes, the nature and quality of theſe locuſts, are deſcribed, partly in alluſion to the properties of natural locuſts, and the deſcription given of them by the prophet Joel; and

and partly, in allusion to the habits, and manners of the Arabians; to shew that not real, but figurative locusts were intended. The first quality mentioned, is, their being like to horses prepared to battle; which is copied from Joel ii. 3. Many authors have observed, that the head of a locust, resembles that of an horse: the Arabians too, have been famous in all ages, for their horses, and horsemanship; their strength is well known to consist, chiefly, in their cavalry.

Another distinguishing mark, is, their having on their heads, as it were, crowns like gold; which is, in allusion to the head-dress of the Arabians, who have constantly worn turbans, or mitres; and boast of having those ornaments for their common attire, which are crowns and diadems with other people. The crowns also signify, the kingdoms which they should acquire: for, as Mr Mead excellently observes, "No nation, had ever so wide a command; nor ever were so many kingdoms, so many regions, subjugated in so short a space of time: it sounds incredible, yet most true it is, that in the space of eighty, or not many more years, they subdued, and acquired to the diabolical kingdom of Mahomed, Palestine, Syria, both Armenia's; almost all Aethiopia Minor, Persia, India, Egypt, Numidia, all Barbary, even to the river Niger, Portugal, Spain; neither did their fortune stop here, till they had added also a great part of Italy, as far as to the gates of Rome; moreover, Sicily, Candia, Cyprus, and the other islands of the Mediterranean sea." Good God! how great a tract of land! how many crowns were here! Whence also, it is worthy of observation, mention is not made here, as in the other trumpets, of the third part; forasmuch as, this plague fell no less without the bounds of the Roman empire, than within it, and extended itself, even to the remotest Indies."

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The Bishop further observes, that one difficulty, and the greatest of all, remains yet to be explained; and that is the period of five months assigned to these locusts; which, being twice mentioned, ver. 5. 10. merits the more particular consideration. It is said, without doubt, in conformity to the type; for locusts are observed to live about five months, that is, from April to September. Scorpions too, as Bochart asserts, are noxious for no longer a term, the cold rendering them torpid and inactive. But of these locusts, it is said, not that their duration or existence was only for five months, but their power of hurting, or tormenting men, continued five months. Now these months, may either be months commonly so taken, or prophetic months, consisting each of 30 days, as St John reckons them, and so making 150 years, at the rate of each day for a year; or, the number being repeated twice, the sums may be thought to be doubled, and twice five months, in prophetic computation, will amount to 300 years.

If these months be taken for common months, then, as the natural locusts live and do hurt only in the five summer-months, so the Saracens in the five summer-months too made their excursions, and retreated again in the winter. It appears, that this was their natural practice; and particularly, when they first besieged Constantinople, in the time of Constantine Pogonatus. For, from the month of April till September, they pertinaciously continued their siege; and then, despairing of success, departed to Cyzicum, where they wintered, and in the spring again renewed the war; and this course they held for seven years, as the Greek annals tell us. If these months be taken for prophetic months, or 150 years; it was within that space of time, that the Saracens made their principal conquests. Their empire.

empire might subsist much longer; but their power of hurting, and tormenting men, was exerted chiefly within that period. Read the history of the Saracens, and you will find, that their greatest exploits were performed, their greatest conquests were made, between the year 612, when Mahomed I. opened the bottomless pit, and began publicly to teach, and propagate his imposture, and the year 762, when the Caliph Almanzor built Bagdad, to fix there the seat of his empire, and called it the city of Peace. Syria, Persia, India, and the greatest part of Asia, Egypt, and the greatest part of Africa, Spain, and some parts of Europe, were all subdued in the intermediate time. But, when the Caliphs, who before, had removed from place to place, fixed their habitation at Bagdad, then the Saracens ceased from their excursions and ravages, like locusts, and became a settled nation; then they made no more such rapid and amazing conquests, as before; but only engaged in common, and ordinary wars, like other nations; then their power and glory began to decline, and their empire, by little and little, to moulder away; then they had no longer, like the prophetic locusts, one king over them: Spain having revolted in the year 756, and set up another Caliph, in opposition to the reigning house of Abbas. If these months be taken doubly, or, for 300 years; then, according to Sir Isaac Newton, "the whole time that the Caliphs of the Saracens reigned, with a temporal dominion, at Damascus and Bagdad together, was 500 years; viz. from the year 637, to the year 936 inclusive; when their empire was broken, and divided into several principalities, or kingdoms. So that, let these five months be taken in any possible construction, the event will still answer, and the prophecy will still be fulfilled; tho' the second method of interpretation, and application,

cation, appears much more probable than either the first or the third.

Verse 12. 13. &c. "One woe is past, &c. and "the sixth angel sounded." This sixth trumpet is, by most commentators, applied to the Turkish empire, as will be seen afterwards.

The object of this awful judgment is the visible church, now full of superstition, and Antichristian idolatry, and for these she is plagued by this trumpet; for judgments are spoken of, in this book, not as they affect the world in general, but as they concern the church. Each of these trumpets, successively, contain a series of judgments upon the same object; and the church being the object of the former trumpet, so must she be of this; otherwise the pronouncing this woe, would contain no further addition to their plagued condition, which is contrary to the scope. The church is now become an idolatrous harlot, and guilty of many gross abominations; as is evident from ver. 20. 21.

It is also certain, that this judgment is of a different kind from the former, and denounceth temporal calamities on the church, already enebriated with spiritual plagues; yet it is such a judgment in temporal things, and also brings along with it gross abominations, and spiritual poison, by which the souls of men are infected; this, their having tails like serpents imports.

Finally then, we imagine, nothing else can be meant, in this place, but the Turkish empire; who, by their great power, cruelty, and the pernicious doctrine of Mahomed, have destroyed both the souls and bodies of men.

The inspired apostle heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar; which was doubtless the voice of the Sovereign of the universe, over-ruling every event in the world to his own glory, and the good of his church, spoke in allusion

tion to his giving responses from the temple of Jerusalem. This voice commands the sixth angel, to loose the four angels that were bound in the great river Euphrates. They have here the appellation of Angels given, to shew how ready, and expeditious they were, to execute God's righteous judgments upon an idolatrous church. They are said to be four; (in chap. vii. 1. we are told, "that four angels held the four winds, that "they should not blow)," so here, these four angels were appointed to spread destruction to the four winds, or four corners of the earth.

Again, these four angels to be loosed, were said to be bound in the river Euphrates. This is a famous river in Syria, frequently mentioned in Scripture, and well known to those acquainted with geography. The learned Bishop Newton has given us the most accurate and distinct account of the rise and progress of the Turkish empire, and what a prodigious scourge they were to the Popish countries; who after all, repented not of their wickedness.

"The four angels, says he, are the four Sultanies, or four leaders of the Turks and Othmans. For there were four principal Sultanies, or kingdoms, of the 'Turks, bordering upon the river Euphrates: one at Bagdad, founded by Togrul-beg, or Tangrolipix, as he is more usually called, in the year 1055: another at Damascus, founded by Tagjuddaulus, or Ducas, in the year 1079: a third at Aleppo, founded by Sjarfuddaulus, or Melech, in the same year 1079: and the fourth at Iconium, in Asia Minor, founded by Sedyddaulus, or Cultu-Mufes, or his son, in the year 1080. These four Sultanies, subsisted several years afterwards; and the Sultans were bound and restrained from extending their conquests, farther than the countries and territories adjoining to the river Euphrates; primarily, by the good

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providence

providence of God, and secondarily, by the croisades, or expeditions of the European Christians into the holy land, in the latter part of the eleventh, and in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Nay, the European Christians took several cities and countries from them, and confined them within narrower bounds. But when an end was put to the croisades, and the Christians totally abandoned their conquests in Syria and Palestine, as they did in the latter part of the thirteenth century, then the four angels on the river Euphrates were loosed. Soliman Shah, the first chief, and founder, of the Othman race, retreating, with his three sons, from Jengiz-Chan and the Tartars, would have passed the river Euphrates, but was drowned; the time of loosing the four angels being not yet come. Discouraged at this sad accident, two of his sons returned to their former habitations; but Ortogrul, the third, with his three sons, Condoz, Sarubani, and Othman, remained sometime in those parts; and, having obtained leave of Aladin the Sultan of Iconium, he came, with four hundred of his Turks, and settled in the mountains of Armenia. From thence they began their excursions; and the other Turks associating with them, and following their standard, they gained several victories, over the Tartars on the one side, and over the Christians on the other. Ortogrul dying in the year 1288, Othman, his son, succeeded him in power and authority; and, in the year 1299, as some say, with the consent of Aladin himself, he was proclaimed Sultan, and founded a new empire; and the people afterwards, as well as the new empire, were called by his name. For, though they disclaim the name of Turks, and assume that of Othmans, yet nothing is more certain, than that they are a mixed multitude, the remains of the four Sultanies above mentioned,

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as well as the descendants, particularly, of the house of Othman.

In this manner, and at this time, the four angels were loosed; which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men; that is, as before, the men of the Roman empire, and especially in Europe, the third part of the world. The Latin, or western empire, was broken to pieces under the four first trumpets; the Greek, or eastern empire, was cruelly hurt, or tormented, under the fifth trumpet; and here, under the sixth trumpet, it is to be slain and utterly destroyed. Accordingly, all Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Thrace, Macedon, Greece, and all the countries which, formerly, belonged to the Greek or eastern Cæsars, the Othmans have conquered and subjugated to their dominion. They first passed into Europe in the reign of Orchan, their second emperor, and, in the year 1357; they took Constantinople, in the reign of Mohammed their seventh emperor, and in the year 1453; and, in time, all the parts that remained of the Greek empire shared the fate of the capital city. The last of their conquests were Candia, or the ancient Crete, in the 1669, and Cameniec, in the 1672. For the execution of this great work, it is said, that they were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year; which will admit either of a literal or mystical interpretation, and the former will hold good if the latter should fail. If it be taken literally, it is only expressing the same thing by different words; as peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues, are jointly used in other places: and then the meaning is, that they were prepared, and ready to execute the divine commission at any time, or for any time, any hour, or day, or month, or year, that God should ap-

point. If it be taken mystically, and the hour, and day, and month, and year, be a prophetic hour, and day, and month, and year, (according to St John's, who follows herein Daniel's computation), consisting of 360 days, is 360 years, and a month, consisting of 30 days, is 30 years, and a day is a year, and an hour, in the same proportion, 15 days; so that the whole period of the Othmans slaying the third part of men, or subduing the Christian states, in the Greek or Roman empire, amounts to 391 years and 15 days. Now it is wonderfully remarkable, that the first conquest, mentioned in history, of the Othmans over the Christians, was in the year of the Hegira 680, and the year of Christ 1281. For Ortogrul, "in that year, (according to the accurate historian Saadi), crowned his victories with the conquest of the famous city Kutahi, upon the Greeks. Compute 391 years from that time, and they will terminate in the year 1672: and in that year, at it was hinted before, Mohammed IV. took Cameniec from the Poles; and forty-eight towns and villages, in the territory of Cameniec, were delivered up to the Sultan, upon the treaty of peace. Whereupon prince Cantemir hath made this memorable reflection: "This was the last victory by which any advantage accrued to the Othman state, or any city or province was annexed to the ancient bounds of the empire."

Agreeably to which observation, he hath entitled the former part of his history, Of the growth of the Othman empire; and the following part, Of the decay of it. "Other wars and slaughters, as he says, have ensued. The Turks even besieged Vienna, in the 1683; but this exceeding the bounds of their commission, they were defeated. Belgrade, and other places, may have been taken from them, and surrendered to them again; but still they have subdued no new state,

state, or potentate, of Christendom, now, for the space of 100 years; and, in all probability, they never may again, their empire appearing rather to decrease than increase." Here then the prophecy and the event agree exactly, in the period of 391 years; and if more accurate and authentic histories of the Othmans were brought to light, and we knew the very day wherein Kutahi was taken, as certainly as we know that wherein Cameniec was taken, the like exactness might also be found in the 15 days. But though the time be limited, for the Othmans slaying the third part of men, yet no time is fixed for the duration of their empire; only, this second woe will end, when the third woe, or the destruction of the beast, shall be at hand.

A description is then given, vers. 16. 17. and 18. of the forces, and of the means and instruments, by which the Othmans should effect the ruin of the eastern empire: their armies are described as very numerous, myriads of myriads; and who knoweth not what mighty armies the Othman emperors have brought into the field? When Mohammed II. besieged Constantinople, he had about 400,000 men in his army, besides a powerful fleet, of thirty larger, and two hundred lesser ships. They are described too, chiefly as horsemen, and so they are described, both by Ezekiel and Daniel, as there was occasion to observe in the last dissertation upon Daniel; it is well known, that their armies consisted chiefly of cavalry, especially before the order of Janizaries was instituted by Amurath I. The Janizaries may be the guard of the court, but the Timariots, or horsemen, holding lands by serving in the wars, are the strength of the government; and these, as Heylen affirms, are, in all, between seven and eight hundred thousand fighting men; some say, that they are a million; and besides

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these,

these, are Spahis, and other horsemen in the emperor's pay.

In the vision ; that is, in appearance, and not in reality ; they had breast-plates of fire, and of jacinth or hyacinth, and brimstone : the colour of fire is red, of hyacinth blue, and of brimstone yellow : and this, as Mr Daubuz observes, hath a literal accomplishment ; for the Othmans, from the first time of their appearance, have affected to wear such warlike apparel, of scarlet, blue, and yellow. Of the Spahis particularly, some have red, and some have yellow standards, and others have red or yellow mix'd with other colours.

In appearance too, the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions, to denote their strength, courage, and fierceness, and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke, and brimstone : a manifest allusion to great guns, and gunpowder, which were invented under this trumpet, and were of such signal service to the Othmans, in their wars. For by these were the third part of men killed ; by these, the Othmans made such havoc and destruction in the Greek, or eastern empire. Amurath II. broke into Peloponnesus, and took several strong places, by the means of his artillery : but his son Mohammed, at the siege of Constantinople, employed such great guns as were never made before : one is described, to have been of such monstrous size, that it was drawn by seventy yoke of oxen, and by two thousand men. There were two more, each of which discharged a stone the weight of two talents ; other emitted a stone of the weight of half a talent : but the greatest of all, discharged a ball of the weight of three talents, or about three hundred pounds ; and the report of this cannon is said to have been so great, that all the country round about was shaken to the distance of forty furlongs.

furlongs. For forty days, the wall was battered by these cannons, and so many breaches were made, that the city was taken by assault, and an end put to the Grecian empire."

Verse 19. " Their power is in their mouths " and in their tails." By mouth is meant their fierce cruelty, in butchering mens bodies. Their tails, signify their horrid and detestable religion, which they compelled men to embrace, or else put them to death. Their tails are said to have heads to them, a strange unnatural like expression, doubtless importing their abominable absurd doctrine. The locusts are said to have tails too, but no heads to them; shewing, that this religion is so grossly absurd, that it is more easily perceived than the former. It is here added, that with their tails and heads they do hurt. We see, in the first part of the verse, that they hurt with the mouth; that is, as we observed, they massacred the bodies of men; and here, by their pernicious doctrine, they destroy their souls: so that, both ways, they are described as a most dreadful plague. This may, with the greatest propriety, be applied to the Othmans, as was said, whose armies spread not more desolation among mankind, than their pernicious and poisonous doctrine did; for God, in his righteous judgment, suffered a great part of the world to be carried away with it.

Bishop Newton observes, " that the Turks draw after them the same poisonous train, as the Saracens; they profess, and propagate the same imposture; they do hurt, not only by their conquests, but also by spreading their false doctrine; and wherever they establish their dominion, there too they establish their religion. Many indeed of the Greek church remained, and are still remaining among them; but they are made to pay dearly for the exercise of their religion, are subjected

to a capitation tax, which is rigorously exacted from all above fourteen years of age; are burdened besides, with the most heavy, and arbitrary impositions, upon every occasion; are compelled to the lowest and most servile drudgery; are abused in their persons, and robbed of their property; have not only the mortification of seeing some of their friends and kindred daily apostatize to the ruling religion, but had even their children taken from them to be educated therein; of whom the more robust and hardy, were trained up to the soldiery, and the more weakly and tender were castrated for the Seraglio; but, notwithstanding these persecutions and oppressions, some remains of the Greek-church are still preserved among them, as we may reasonably conclude, to serve some great and mysterious ends of providence."

Verse 20 and 21. " And the rest of men, who " were not killed with these plagues, yet repented " not, &c."

This points out to us, what crimes procured so dreadful a plague, and so cruel an enemy to be let loose upon the Christian world; these will vindicate the justice of God, in punishing them with such severity. Of all vices to which men are liable, surely idolatry is none of the least; and tho' God long bore with the heathen world, notwithstanding their abominable, cruel, and idolatrous rites; yet he cannot endure it in those, who were once his professed church and people. In order therefore to cure them effectually of that abominable vice, and the many other grievous errors they had foolishly imbibed, he permitted the Turks, that dreadful scourge of the human race, to cut off vast numbers of them; yet so mad were these who survived, upon their idols, that they continue to worship devils to this day.

The first sin charged upon them is, worship-
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ping the works of their own hands. The images, and statues, erected in their churches, are made with men's hands; and therefore, they cannot be the object of worship. They are also called worshippers of devils: it is not to be supposed, that Papists directly worship the devil; but, as images are teachers of lies, supposed to represent what is truly spiritual and invisible. "To what will ye liken me?" saith God: how is it possible to represent, by any thing whatsoever, him, who is a pure Spirit? and our Saviour, bids his disciples "touch and handle him, for a spirit, saith he, hath not flesh and bones as you see me have." This is not only a breach of the first commandment, but also of the second; which, by the bye, Papists strike off the decalogue): this strictly prohibits the making of any image, of any thing in heaven, earth, or sea, or bowing down before them. We see what is said of Jeroboam, 2 Chron. xi. 15. "He ordained him priests for the high places; and for devils, and for the calves, which he had made;" and yet it does not appear, that he meant to worship the calves, far less devils, in the room of God. Their idolatry is also aggravated by the variety and multiplicity of it: their idols are said to be made of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood;" of which sort of metals, images, crucifixes, relics, &c. are abundant in the Popish churches. How can any reasonable being, who is endowed with reason or common sense, imagine, that these senseless things can in the least be serviceable to them; especially, seeing they are so strictly prohibited in sacred writ? See Psalm cxv. 4. and cxxxviii. 15. Where the Psalmist pronounces the worshippers of these, as stupid and senseless as the things they worship.

These impenitent men are charged with four other vices, viz. murder, sorcery, fornications, and thefts. Papists as well as Mahometans, have been

been guilty of murders in both kinds; they murder the soul by their pernicious doctrines; and how many butcheries, massacres, and persecutions, have Roman-catholics committed upon those they called heretics, as may be seen in chap. xi. 7. and xiii. 7. and xviii. 24. of this book. The next thing to be considered is, their sorceries, which figuratively signify, their delusive and bewitching doctrine; but, literally taken, it signifies devilish, and magical arts. In the first sense, the woman arrayed in purple, chap. xvii. 4. is said to have a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations, &c.; and in the second, Antichrist is said to come after the working of Satan, with signs, and lying wonders, as in 2 Thess. ii. 9. What is signified by both, is found to be in Popery; their doctrine has blinded and bewitched many thousands; also, magic arts, with lying signs, wonders, and many other abominable tricks, have been played off; not only by their inferior clergy, but also, by Popes themselves.

And this has been avowed by them in many cases, under pretence of working miracles, and exorcisms. The next sin charged upon them is fornication, taken both in a spiritual sense, as in departing from God, and placing the affections on the creature, Jer. iii. 1. "Thou hast a whore's forehead, thou refusest to be ashamed;" where the prophet is reproving the people for departing from God, and following after idolatry; and also, in a natural sense, the sin of fornication and adultery, is justly charged upon the Popish clergy; what else could prompt them to prohibit marriage? but that they might have the more freedom to commit these crimes. Bellarmine says, "It is more tolerable to commit fornication, than for one under a vow to marry, though he have not the gift of continence; because, says he, marriage renders him unable to keep his vow, which the other does

does not." It is well known, that public stews, or brothels, have been openly licensed at Rome, and in many Popish countries: for those in Rome itself, the Pope is said to have received annually 4000 crowns. Nay it is well known, that popes, as well as inferior clergy, have been addicted to these vices. In the history of the popes, we are informed, that Pope Joan brought forth a child during her popedom. These are not forged stories, as some of our modern Papists assert, but facts well authenticated by their own writers, as well as others.

There is a book published, some time ago, by Anthony Egans, B. D. late confessor general of the kingdom of Ireland; the title of it is, the Book of Rates, now used in the sin custom-house of the church and court of Rome, containing the bulls, dispensations, and pardons for all manner of villainies, and wickedness; with the several sums of money given, and to be paid for them. Page 13. there are these dispensations for priests, and others, under the celibat-vow: "A priest or friar, having lien carnally with a woman, of whatever sort or degree, whether a nun, or a kinswoman, or relation, or with any other, whether married or single, whether within the bounds or cloisters of his monastery, or elsewhere; whether the absolution be made in the name of the clergy or not, it gives him power to exercise his function, and to hold his livings, he paying L. 36:9:6. For the sin of buggary, they must pay L. 90:12:1. A Nun may play the whore very often, for paying L. 36:9:0. One that keeps a whore at bed and board, with a dispensation to hold a benefice, must pay L. 4:5:6." Prideaux tells us of Pope Sixtus IV. "that he made a grant to the Cardinal of Lucia, to use unnatural lusts, for three months in the year; viz. in June, July, and August:

gust: this same Pope built a public stew in Rome, at his own expence."

Cramuel asserts, " That it is doubtful, whether a man may not murder a woman after he has lien with her, if she offer to discover what passed between them " Were we to recount the lewdness of even popes themselves, our essay would swell into a monstrous size; we shall only select a few of them. Pope John XII. was wounded in the temples, when in bed with another man's wife; of which wound he died, in eight days. Pope Benedict XII. bought a beautiful woman, of her brother for a concubine. Paul III. prostituted his own daughter Julia to Alexander VI. that he might be made a cardinal; he also committed incest with his own daughter Constantia, and poisoned her husband, that he might enjoy her with the greater freedom; he likewise committed incest with his own sister, and is said to have been a necromancer. Yet from this pope's piety came the council of Trent. We have already mentioned Pope Joan, who, after being pope for two years and six months, fell into labour in the midst of a procession. There was also a Popeess, or mistress of Pope Innocent X. his sister-in-law, named Dona Olympia, who managed the popedom during his life. Platina reports, " that no less than six thousand infants skulls, were found in a fish pond at Rome, during the pontificate of Gregory the great, all murdered to conceal the lewdness of the clergy;" this is only a small sample or specimen of the immoralities of that person, who styles himself infallible.

The last vice, mentioned in ver. 21. is their thefts. Theft is the taking, either by force or fraud, what belongs to others, and appropriating it to one's own use. We will likewise find the Popish clergy guilty of this, in a very high degree; what with donations, mortifications, indulgences, annates,

nates, Peter's patrimony, Peter's pence, and the like, they had amassed large property of the richest lands in Europe ; besides immense quantities of gold, silver, and other wealth, with which the Popish clergy abound.

Platina, Martinus, Onuphrius, and Bellarmine, all Popish writers, uniformly declare, that from the year 670, downward, bribery prevailed at the election of their popes ; that they used magic arts, were ambitious, factious, and violent ; and that they poisoned and imprisoned their predecessors. Some of these popes were monstrously vitious ; they were addicted to cruelty, adultery, and giving up themselves to the devil. John XIII. was an infamous wicked man, from his very infancy ; whatever time he could spare from the gratification of his lusts, he spent in hunting : at last, he was murdered, in the very act of adultery.

Sylvester II. having obtained the popedom by sinister methods, is said to have delivered up himself to the devil ; and promised to be his wholly after death, provided he would assist him in his wicked projects. Let any one, without prejudice, read the history of the popes, and he will see more than sufficient to convince him, how justly Papists have been punished by the plague of the sixth trumpet, or by the Turks and Saracens.

From what has been said, we may learn, that the Turks made dreadful havoc among the subjects of Antichrist's kingdom ; yet a great part repented not, which were afterwards to be destroyed by the vials. How foolishly, nay, how madly do these erroneous people doat upon their idols, even in this enlightened age, though they may be certain God will pour out the vials of his wrath upon them.

We have already observed, that the learned

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and ingenious bishop Newton, has applied the fifth trumpet entirely to the Saracens ; which, we conceive, can only be done in a secondary manner, for the reasons we there gave. But why may we not join the Saracens along with the Turks ; who have conjunctly made up one great empire, are of the same religion, have the same laws and customs, have uniformly made war together upon the Christians, with the same unrelenting rage ; and seeing the event of what is predicted here, is exactly fulfilled in them ; as is evident, by comparing their history with this prophecy : and, considering the prodigious slaughter they have made in the Christian world, and the religion they have introduced, we cannot imagine these would be passed over in this book.

It is very remarkable, that a few years before Boniface assumed the purple, Mahomet, aided by one Sergius a monk, and John Antiochenus an Arian, had the dexterity to invent and propagate the Turkish religion ; being a compound of the Heathen, Jewish, and Christian religions, interlarded with the wildest and most incoherent nonsense, that could ever enter into the mind of man ; yet of such a nature, that it was very palatable to man, in his natural and depraved state. As the alcorn and life of Mahomet, are now in English, the curious may satisfy themselves of the truth of our assertion : only we think it proper to observe here, that Mahomet was a mortal enemy to idolatry ; and it appears evident, that God over-ruling the hands and pens of that triumvirate, in order to render Mahomet and his followers, a more vindictive scourge of idolatrous Christians, prevented them from falling into idolatry, to which men in all ages have been addicted.

This Mahomet did not, (like the popes at first), content himself with the character of a priest, but

but soon became a mighty temporal monarch: for Heraclius the emperor, having disbanded a great part of the army of the Arabians, that were assisting to him in his wars, Mahomet knew mankind too well to lose so favourable an opportunity; but easily insinuated himself into their good graces, and soon became their leader.

Soon after this, they changed their names from Ihmaelites to Saraceas, that they might not be reckoned a race of bastards: afterwards he conquered Arabia, and settled for some time in Mecha; then they invaded Syria and Damascus, the capital of their dominions. It is almost incredible, how rapid their conquests were over many countries; yet they got little footing in Europe, till they were conquered by the Turks, when they became one people with them. Since that time, they have acquired a mighty empire, partly in Asia, partly in Africa, and partly in Europe: but this great unwieldy empire, is now on the decline; and they, who were once a terror to all Europe, were very much humbled, within these few years, by Russia; and as they lie contiguous to one another, and may be supposed to have frequent quarrels, who knows, but the next time they engage with that formidable power, (which is increasing as much, in the military art, as they are declining), they will make an entire conquest of them, and invite the Jews to come and settle in Palestine, the ancient residence of their progenitors, from which they have been long debarred for their idolatry, and crucifying the Lord of life.

A specious objection is made by Bellarmine and other Popish writers, to the application of this trumpet to the Turks. These eastern parts, of the empire, say they, of which the Turks have got possession, have been least submissive to the pope; and therefore this plague of the Turks

may rather be reckoned a judgment on them, for making a schism in the church, than a plague upon the pope. In reply, we maintain, that these churches were, for the most part, submissive to him; for it is said, chap. xiii. 8. that all that dwell upon the earth, (meaning the Christian world), shall worship the beast; and so were subject to the pope, as their own writers boast.

Now, so many Christians having been slain by the Turks, they must either acknowledge, that there has been a great destruction on the Popish kingdoms, or that a third part of the Christian world did not belong to him: this they will not readily allow. Suppose then, that some of these eastern churches withdrew from his allegiance, yet being once infected with idolatry, and other gross errors, by the Roman pontiffs, they would still retain these errors, till this judgment overtook them; thus God gave warning to others, involved in the same guilt, by inflicting this punishment upon them. It pleased God, in his sovereign justice, to punish those eastern churches, rather than others, for the following reasons: 1st, Because it appears, that he designs not to overthrow the beast by the Turks, but to reserve two thirds of his kingdom, for other holy and wise purposes. 2dly, God had raised up faithful men, to testify against the corruptions of Antichrist, in the eastern churches, which rendered them more guilty, and less excusable; because, notwithstanding their being led away by these errors, this punishment inflicted upon them, is therefore the more just. Again, 3dly, By punishing them who appeared least guilty, God evidently shews, how odious every sin is to him; and that others might be warned who were more wicked, who worshipped the beast, and had received his mark, chap. xvi. By which it is apparent,

parent, that these two thirds went further lengths, in acknowledging the pope's supremacy, than the other third who were first punished; though they were equally guilty in other particulars. Lastly, It is plain, that the pope's power is much lessened by the Turk; and many of these who absolutely depended on the pope were cut off, not only in the holy war, (as they foolishly called it); besides, many kingdoms, cities, and armies, that fully acknowledged him: on them he conferred many benedictions, and gave them consecrated crosses, swords, banners, &c. in order to encourage them to undertake the war with greater cheerfulness. Nay more, many of the emperors of the eastern empire, a little before its annihilation, came to be crowned at Rome, and to receive the pope's benediction. In the year 1274, Michael, emperor of Constantinople, undertook to bring all the Greek churches under the obedience of pope Gregory X.

From all which, we may confidently aver, that the cruelties exercised by the Turks and Saracens, have been a very great plague to the kingdom of Antichrist.

Now, after sounding the sixth trumpet, one would expect the seventh should immediately succeed; but the tenth chapter, and part of the eleventh, intervene. This, we think, is done with a design to comfort the church, which was exposed to long and cruel sufferings, during the reign of Antichrist: for though the Turk destroyed one third part of his kingdom, yet two thirds remained; who yet repented not, but were as mad upon their idolatry, and worshipping the beast, as ever. They exercised all manner of cruelties without controul, till the time the seventh trumpet began to sound. The people of God, (however few in number), would be ready to think that God had forgotten them: therefore our glorious Mediator commissions his servant John

to inform his church, that after her suffering a little longer, and as soon as the seventh trumpet began to found, he would pour out the vials of his wrath upon the beast and his adherents; and continue to plague them, as they had done her, till he should utterly extirpate them from the earth; and raise up a glorious church from their ruins.

C H A P. X.

“ John, in the conclusion of the last chapter, having touched upon the corruption of the western church, proceeds now to deliver some prophecies relating to this lamentable event: but before he enters upon this subject, he (and the church in him), is prepared for it, by an august and consolatory vision. Another mighty angel came down from heaven, described somewhat like the angel in the three last chapters of Daniel, and in the first chapter of the Revelation. He had in his hand bibliaridion, or a little book or codicil, different from the biblion, or book mentioned before: and it was open, that all men might freely read and consider it. It was indeed a codicil to the larger book, and properly cometh under the sixth trumpet, to describe the state of the western church, after the description of the state of the eastern: and this is, with good reason, made a separate and distinct prophecy, on account of the importance of the matter; as well as for engaging the greater attention. He set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot upon the earth, to shew the extent of his power and commission: and when he had cried aloud, (ver. 3.) seven thunders uttered their voices. John would have written down these words which the seven thunders uttered, but was forbidden to do it. As we know not the subjects of the seven thunders, so neither can we know the reasons for suppressing them; but it may be conceived

conceived, that some things might be proper to be revealed to the apostle, and yet not fit to be communicated to the church. By the seven thunders, Vitring understands the seven great croisades, or expeditions of the western Christians for the conquest of the holy land, and Danbuz, the seven kingdoms which received and established the Protestant reformation by law. But it favours of presumption to pretend to conjecture, when the Holy Spirit hath purposely concealed it from us. Then the angel (verf 5. 6. 7.) lifted up his hand to heaven, like the angel in Dan. xii. 7. and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, (the great Creator of all things), that time shall not be yet; but it shall be in the days of the seventh trumpet, that the mystery of God shall be finished, and the glorious state of his church be perfected, agreeably to the good things which he hath promised to his servants the prophets. This is said, for the consolation of Christians, that though the little book describes the calamities of the western church, yet they shall all have a happy period under the seventh trumpet. John is then ordered, (ver. 8. 9. 10.) to eat the little book, as Ezekiel (iii. 3.) did upon a like occasion: and he eat it up; he thoroughly considered and digested it, and found it to be, as he was informed it would be, sweet as honey in his mouth, but bitter in his stomach. The knowledge of future things, at first was pleasant, but the sad contents of the little book, afterwards, filled his soul with sorrow. But these contents were not to be sealed up, like those of the seven thunders: this little book was to be published, (ver. 11.) as well as the larger book of the Apocalypse; and, as it concerned kings and nations, so it was to be made public, for their use and information. See bishop Newton *in loco*.

C H A P. XI.

“ In the former part of this chapter, from the first verse to the fourteenth, are exhibited the contents of this little book. The apostle is commanded to measure the inner court, the temple of God, and the altar; and them who worship therein, to shew, that during all this period, there were some true Christians who conformed to the rule and measure of God's word. This measuring might allude, more particularly, to the reformation from Popery, which fell out under the sixth trumpet, says bishop Newton; and one of the moral causes of it, was the Othmans taking Constantinople; whereupon the Greeks, flying from their own country, and bringing their books with them, into the western parts of Europe, proved the happy occasion of the revival of learning; as that opened mens eyes, it proved the happy occasion of the reformation.”

The material temple of Jerusalem is here alluded to, having three courts; the outer court is that where people had access to worship God, upon their solemn festivals; the next to that, was called the court of the priests; the third was the holy of holies, where no man was permitted to enter, but the high priest once a-year. It may likewise have allusion to Ezekiel's vision, (chap. xl. 41.) and downward; signifying, that God made a difference among professors of that time, and that a bare profession of religion availed nothing with him.

It also shews us, that God sets apart some for himself, whilst others are neglected. Thus in Ezek. xlvii. 18. the land is said to be measured; and on this account, Israel is frequently called the rod of God's inheritance, Psal. lxxiv. 2. Jer. x. 16. &c.; as measured by him, in opposition to all other nations. It likewise points out God's special

special care and protection of those true worshippers in the temple, as if he was preparing a house for them to rest in, during that time. This measuring of the temple is opposed to the casting out of the outer court to the Gentiles, which is not to be measured, as being beneath his notice; this is agreeable to chap. xii. 14. where a place is to be prepared for the woman during that time. And again, this measuring of the temple is opposed to the opening of it, chap. xv.: that opening refers to the enlarged condition of the church, when the true ministers of the gospel should be properly acknowledged; but this points out her secret, retired condition, when her ministers were obliged to retire into dens and caves, and durst not make a public appearance, which they were permitted to have, when the seventh trumpet began to blow. This may also have an allusion to Daniel's prophecy concerning Antiochus, his making desolate the temple of Jerusalem; and, in this case, the parallel will be, as the Jewish temple and church were oppressed and trode under foot by Antiochus, for a time, so shall the visible church be defaced, polluted, and over-run by Antichrist, during his tyrannical usurpation thereof. Yet will the Lord preserve a remnant unspotted, as in the time of Antichrist.

The outer court is given to the Gentiles. It is well known, this name was given by the Jews to all other nations. The Jews alone were God's peculiar people; to them alone he permitted access to worship in the second court of the priests. By Gentiles, in this place, we are not to understand Heathens; for they are not capable to possess the visible church, or to assume its name; for even, when it is given up to them, and is trode upon by them, it still continues to be the outer court: besides, the time of their treading it must be

be whilst Antichrist sits in the temple of God ; and therefore must be understood of him and his followers : these may be called Gentiles, because though they seem to bear the name of Christians, and so did not destroy, but possess the outer court, and retain the name of the Christian church, yet because of their defection from the purity of the gospel, and their superstitious worship, they may more properly be called Gentiles than Christians ; in which respect, the Pope or Antichrist is said to have the name of blasphemy, even as the Heathen had before him. The following expressions illustrate this more fully, *viz.* " They shall tread the holy city under foot forty and two months " What was formerly called the outer court, is now called the holy city ; that is, the visible church, whereof Jerusalem, the holy city, was a type. They shall tread upon it ; that is, they shall pollute, destroy, and quite mar its beauty, for 42 months, or 1260 days, at 30 days each month. Suppose a day taken for a year, as is sometimes done in holy writ, and this period to commence about the year 300, or a little after, as has been observed, then this period will end about the year 1560, when the reformation took place ; or, suppose it began about the year 600, when Boniface assumed the title of universal bishop, then it will terminate about the year 1860 ; a third opinion, a great deal later than any of the former, may be added, but is supported by the authority of the great Sir Isaac Newton, and others : these make it to begin about the year 756, when the pope assumed the regal power, or when he put on the triple crown. If we may be allowed to form a conjecture, perhaps we may shew, that all the three opinions are right. As to the first period, commencing at the year 300, and ending about the year 1560. As errors made rapid progress in the

the church whenever she enjoyed outward peace; so the reformation, though partial, has gradually dispelled error from many parts of Europe; also the pope's power, as has been said, has gradually diminished since that period, and now he is a mere cypher, in comparison of what he was formerly; being rather now continued as a political engine, to foster and continue despotic power, among the Popish states. As to the second opinion, that begins a little after the year 600, and ends at the 1860. The pope, about the year 600, declared himself universal bishop; so perhaps he may be driven from Rome, and that there shall be no pope after the year 1860. However, it is to be wished, that it may be sooner. Then concerning the last period, which commenceth at the year 756, and ends at the 2016: it is probable, at the expiration of this period, all Papists, together with all the other enemies of Christ and his church, shall be utterly destroyed, when Gog and Magog are also cut off.

Now, to return to our subject. It is not to be supposed, two prophets could live and prophesy 42 months, 1260 years: the meaning is, whilst Antichrist was gradually arriving at, and after he came to his height, till he began to fall at the reformation, there were always some ordinary ministers, faithfully witnessing against his idolatry and superstition. Of these witnesses there should be, though but a small, yet a competent number; and it was a sufficient reason for making them two witnesses, because that is the number required by the law, and approved by the gospel, Deut. xix. 5. Matth. xviii. 16. "In the mouth of two witnesses shall every word be established." And, upon former occasions, two have often been joined in commission; as Moses and Aaron in Egypt, Elijah and Elitha, in the apostacy of the ten tribes, and Zerubbabel
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and Joshua, after the Babylonish captivity ; to whom these witnesses are particularly compared. Our Saviour sent forth his disciples, Luke x. 1. two and two : and it hath been observed also, that the principal reformers have usually appeared, as it were, in pairs ; as the Waldenses and Albigenes, John Hufs and Jerome of Prague, Luther and Calvin, Cranmer and Ridley, Wishart and Knox, and their followers. Not that we conceive, that any two particular men, or two particular churches, were intended by this prophecy ; but only it was meant, in the general, that there should be some, in every age, though but few in number, who should bear witness to the truth, and declare against the iniquity and idolatry of their times. They should not be discouraged, even by persecution and oppression ; but, though clothed in sackcloth, and living in a mourning and afflicted state, should yet prophecy ; should yet preach the sincere word of God, and denounce the divine judgments against the reigning idolatry and wickedness ; and this they should continue to do, as long as the great corruption itself lasted, for the space of a thousand and two hundred and threescore days.

Verſ. 7. 8. 9. and 10. “ And when they shall “ have finished their testimony,” &c. These verses set before us the barbarous usage, which these two witnesses should meet with, from the Antichristian world, for the faithful discharge of their duty ; they shall be slain pontically, say some ; that is, they shall be deposed and silenced, imprisoned, and laid aside as useless and dead : literally say others, they shall be put to death with fire and fagot. “ They shall overcome “ them ;” that is, they shall get power over their bodies, to torture and kill them. God sometimes suffers his own people actually to be put to death, for his own glory, their honour, and the
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good of the church. Observe the time specified, when they were slain ; it was, when they had finished their testimony, and not till then. This may be about the expiring of the 42 months, or, when Antichrist came to his height. For, as has been said above, the time of the witnesses prophesying is cotemporary with the beast's reign ; their putting on sackcloth is occasioned by his rise, and so beginning together they must also end together ; viz. they in some measure may be said to put off their sackcloth at the beast's begun fall. Here a double question will arise, 1. How can their testimony be said to be finished, seeing ministers must continue testifying to the end ? 2. How can the beast be said to prevail more against them, at his begun ruin, than during his reign ? In answer to these, we say, that during the triumphant reign of Antichrist, faithful ministers were few in number, in comparison of what succeeded them ; therefore these few, who were shut up in corners, not daring to appear openly, having gone off the stage immediately after the reformation, a great number of faithful ministers succeeded in their place ; who, though persecuted, openly continue to bear witness to the truth. And, though Antichrist is arrived at his height, his malice and cruelty, against the faithful still continue ; and by this cruelty he is more discernable, and the period containing his height, more easily distinguished from his begun, and continued ruin.

2. Now the number of witnesses being mightily increased, and openly testifying against the idolatry of Antichrist, this cuts him to the heart, and fills him more than ever with implacable rage and hatred against them ; and hurries him on, to set all the engines of hell at work, in order, if possible, to extirpate them from the earth. And God, in his sovereign wisdom, permits him so far to pre-

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vail, as to put many of them to death, that by their sufferings, the truth may appear more conspicuous; and the errors of Antichrist be more evidently displayed; which tended much to further the reformation.

These glorious witnesses, as was said, having finished their testimony, are killed by the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit; *viz.* Antichrist, or the Roman Pontiff. This is the same beast mentioned chap. xiii. 7. 8.: he is called, a beast making war with the saints; here he is said not only to make war, and overcome, but also to kill them. He may be called a beast, in allusion to these in Daniel; either in respect of his power and grandeur, or for his cruel, and savage nature. He comes from the bottomless pit, *viz.* from hell. He is denominated, chap. ix. the angel of the bottomless pit, who cometh after the working of Satan; whose servant he is, as his tenets declare. Here it is in the present tense, he ascendeth; that is, he was beginning in John's time to work secretly; and even more early in the Apostle Paul's time, as 2 Theff ii. 7. "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work," by mixing error with truth. A question may here be asked, why is he now said to make war, overcome, and kill? did he not do so during the 42 months? doubtless he did: all that time he persecuted the saints; but then it could scarce have the name of war, as he had so few to fight against. But after the reformation had got footing in Britain, Germany, France, and many other places, when whole kingdoms forsook him; he was then obliged to muster up all his forces against them, *viz.* the Popish powers in Europe; and, as the common people were then very illiterate, he published his bulls, and anathemas, against their kings; and endeavoured to persuade the people, that he had power to free them from their

their allegiance to their sovereigns. These vain threats began now to be disregarded; but this, so far from diminishing, increased Antichrist's cruelty and barbarity to these witnesses; for, after their death, he will not suffer them to be buried. What could he possibly do more, to brand them with infamy, and disgrace, than to order their bodies to lie and rot above ground, like brute beasts? This was very common, and ordinary, in the persecutions of England, Germany, France, and Helvetia, especially with ministers, and people of distinction; such as Zuinglius, the admiral of France, and many others. Nay, even their very bones were dug out of their graves, and burnt, as was done to Bucer, by wicked Mary of England. It is a sure sign that religion comes not from God, which is forced upon men by fire and faggot; and where the greatest exertions of savage cruelty are used in its behalf: here, however, we may admire the infinite wisdom, and over-ruling providence of God, who makes the very wrath of man to redound to his own praise, and to the advancement of religion; for he suffers his witnesses to be maltreated, persecuted, and slain, and even their bodies to be rotting above ground; yet he will not suffer their testimony to be buried in oblivion, but makes that very obloquy a means of preserving their memory, and advancing the reformation.

All this is said to be done in the street of the great city, spiritually called, Sodom and Egypt. By great city here, is certainly meant Rome, or, the Roman empire; if literally understood, it may apply to Jerusalem, compared to Sodom for the sins of the Gnostics committed in her; and, to Egypt for the oppression of God's people: but, if mystically understood, Rome, or the Roman empire, is here meant; like Egypt for idolatry, tyranny, spiritual darkness, obstinacy, and obdu-

racy; like Sodom for uncleanness, not only practised, but tolerated; yea, allowed publicly: licences being there given to houses of bad fame, and books written in defence of Sodomy at Rome; where Christ may be said to be crucified in his members, so long as this apostate power continues.

In the reign of Henry VIII. of England, search was made into the monasteries, concerning the conduct of the Romish clergy, their names, and crimes; and, in Battle-abbey were found fifteen Sodomites; in Canterbury eight, and one that kept three whores; in Chichester, two Sodomites, in the cathedral church, one that kept thirteen whores; in Bath monastery, one had seven whores, and was a Sodomite. Were we to rake this dunghill, through the Popish dominions, what a glorious retinue would we expose to view, all listed under the infallible Pope! who, with the greatest propriety, may be stiled, the king of the bottomless pit, as their works declare. But modesty bids us stop, lest we offend the ears of our chaste readers. Is it possible men should be so infatuated, and so blind, as not to perceive how exactly these characters agree to that bigotted people, who are still doating upon their idols, notwithstanding the light that now shines around them? this cannot fail highly to aggravate their condemnation.

These wicked Egyptians, and Sodomites, as they are called; are said to see the dead bodies for three days and a half, and not suffer them to be buried. We are not warranted to fix any precise time to this; Bishop Newton observes, "That some commentators are of opinion, this prophecy, of the death and resurrection of the witnesses, received its completion, in the case of John Huss, and Jerom of Prague; who were two faithful witnesses, and martyrs of the blessed Jesus. It is
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very well known, that they were condemned to death, and afterwards burnt for heresy, by the council of Constance. Which council, sitting about three years and an half, from November 1414, to April 1418; their bodies may that time be said to have lain unburied in the street of the great city, in Constance; where was the greatest assembly, not only of bishops and cardinals, but likewise, of the ambassadors, barons, counts, dukes, princes, and the emperor himself. But, after the council was dissolved, these two preachers were restored, as it were, to life, in their disciples and followers; who propagated the same doctrines, and maintained them by force of arms, and vanquished the imperialists in several battles. It was truly said to them, Come up hither, when they were invited to the council of Basil, with a promise of redress of grievances; but, the council having dealt fraudulently with them, they broke out again into open rebellion; and tenth part of the city fell, the kingdom of Bohemia revolted, and fell alike from its obedience to the pope and emperor."

"Others, says the Bishop, refer this prophecy to the Protestants of the league of Smalcald, who were entirely routed by the emperor Charles V. in the battle of Muiberg, on the 24th of April, 1547; when the two great champions of the Protestants, John Frederic, elector of Saxony, was taken prisoner, and the landgrave of Hesse, was forced to surrender himself, and to beg pardon of the emperor. Protestantism was then in a manner suppressed, and the mass restored: the witnesses were dead, but not buried; and the Papists rejoiced over them, and made merry, and sent gifts to one another. But this joy and triumph of theirs, was of no long continuance; for, in the space of about three years and an half, the Protestants were raised again at Magdeburg, and defeated, and took the Duke of Mecklenburg pri-

soner, in December 1550. From that time their affairs changed for the better, almost every day; success attended their arms and counsels; and the emperor was obliged, by the treaty of Passau, to allow them the free exercise of their religion; and to re-admit them into the imperial chamber; from which they had, ever since the victory of Mühlberg, been excluded. Here was indeed a great earthquake, a great commotion, in which many thousands were slain, and the tenth part of the city fell; a great part of the German empire renounced the authority, and abandoned the communion of the church of Rome.

Some again, may think this prophecy very applicable to the horrid massacre at Paris, and in other cities of France, begun on the memorable eve of St Bartholomew's day, 1572. According to the best authors, there were slain thirty, or forty thousand Hugonots, in a few days; and among them, without doubt, many true witnesses, and faithful martyrs of Jesus Christ. Their dead bodies lay in the streets of the great city, one of the greatest cities of Europe; for they were not suffered to be buried, being the bodies of heretics; but were dragged through the street, or thrown into the river, or hung upon gibbets, and exposed to public infamy. Great rejoicings too, were made in the courts of France, Rome, and Spain; they went in procession to the churches, they returned public thanks to God, they sung *te Deums*, they celebrated jubilees, they struck medals, and, it was enacted, that St Bartholomew's day, should ever afterwards be kept with double pomp and solemnity. But neither was this joy of long continuance; for, in a little more than three years and an half, Henry III. who succeeded his brother, Charles IX. entered into a treaty with the Hugonots; which was concluded and published, on the 14th of May 1576, whereby all the

the former sentences against them were reversed, and the free and open exercise of their religion was granted to them; they were to be admitted to all honours, dignities, and offices, as well as the Papists; and the judges were to be half of the one religion, and half of the other; with other articles, greatly to their advantage, which were, in a manner, the resurrection of the witnesses, and their ascension into heaven. The great earthquake, and the falling of the tenth part of the city, and the slaying of thousands of men, according to this hypothesis, must be referred to the great commotions and civil wars, which, for several years afterwards, cruelly disturbed, and, almost destroyed the kingdom of France.

Others apply this prophecy to latter times, as to the persecution of Lewis XIV. of France, in the 1685; others to the massacre of the Piedmontese, by the duke of Savoy, in the year 1686. Being assisted by the Protestant states, they regained their ancient possessions, with great slaughter of their enemies; the duke granted them a full pardon, and re-established them by another edict, signed June 4. 1690, just three years and a half after their total dissipation. These were, indeed, most barbarous persecutions of the Protestants, both in France and Savoy; and at the same time, Popery in Britain was advanced to the throne, and threatened an utter subversion of our religion and liberties; but in little more than three years and a half, a happy deliverance was wrought by the glorious revolution.

In all these cases, there may be some resemblance to the prophecy before us, of the death and resurrection of the witnesses; and it may please an over-ruling Providence to dispose and order events, that the calamities and afflictions of the church may in some measure run parallel one to another; and all the former efforts of that tyrannical

tyrannical and persecuting power, called the beast; may be the types and figures, as it were, of this his last and greatest effort against the witnesses. But though these instances sufficiently answer in some respects, yet they are deficient in others, and particularly in this, that they are none of them the last persecution; others have been since, and in all probability will be again. Besides, as the two witnesses are designed to be the representatives of the Protestants in general, so the persecution must be general too, and not confined to this or that particular church or nation." Thus far bishop Newton.

We have seen this Antichristian rabble rejoice, make merry, and send gifts to one another. Now, say they, we have obtained our wishes over these men who tormented us; let us then praise God, because we have murdered his faithful ministers and people; who, by the purity of their doctrine and manners, stung us to the quick; as Stephen's hearers were cut to the heart, whilst he accused them of murdering the Prince of Life. Wicked men cannot endure a faithful gospel minister. The church of Rome were now so dreadfully sunk in vice and immorality, besides the stupid senseless doctrines they maintained, and their own gross ignorance, which, before the reformation, was truly proverbial; it is no wonder that the writings and discourses of Calvin, Luther, and others, should give them great uneasiness, and fill them with the utmost rage and detestation against them. Ever since the fall of man, there has been, and will be, to the end of time, a natural and unremitted enmity between the seed of the woman, and that of the serpent. This easily accounts for all the cruel and bloody persecutions raised, in every age, against the people of God; they are always the butt of Satan's malice; and he is never

ver at a loss, to procure men base enough to execute his hellish projects.

Verf. 11. 12. We have already seen the two witnesses slain, and their bodies left unburied for three days and a half; in this verse their resurrection is foretold. This, by some, is understood politically dead, that is, laid aside as useless, were now politically alive; that is, restored to their public work and employment in the church again; God putting it into the heart of Princes and magistrates, to own and favour them; and accordingly, by their ascending into heaven, is meant, their recovering their public liberty again, as has been said, and permitted to execute their ministerial functions without molestation; which, in comparison of the low and sackcloth-condition they were in before, was like a heaven to them. And they ascend in a cloud, that is gloriously; spoken, perhaps, in allusion to our Saviour's resurrection; and their enemies beheld them with an envious eye, because of the work of their hands, which it was not in their power to hinder.

Others understand their resurrection, (in the foresaid manner), to be not of the same men; but others endued with the same spirit and office, restored to the same work, to the admiration of the good, and consternation of the bad; and that the voice of Christ spake to the slain witnesses, Come up to heaven and receive the reward of your sufferings and services; let others who succeed you in office partake of your spirit, and perfect that work, which you have so gloriously begun and carried on.

Whence we may observe, that God's faithful witnesses, viz. such magistrates and ministers as have done great things for the church of God, are taken up to heaven, before they behold the
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desired issue, which is left to be completed by their successors.

Verf. 13. 14. The same hour there was a great earthquake, &c. By this chap. vi. 12. and ver. 19. of this chapter, is meant great and sudden temporal changes; that is, great shaking of Antichrist's kingdom, or the great commotions which ushered in the reformation. The devil, and his lieutenant the pope, raising enmity against the gospel, and God powerfully carrying on his design, makes the earth, as it were, to shake, till he accomplish it. This did truly happen, when at first the witnesses separating from the church of Rome, were brought into a visible church-state in Germany. France, Holland, Britain, &c.; and may, with propriety, be reckoned a fulfilling of this prophecy. By this earthquake, a twofold effect is produced. 1. A tenth part of the city fell: that, as we said above, may refer primarily to the kingdom of Bohemia; or more generally, that many nations or kingdoms, under the tyranny and dominion of Antichrist, shook off his yoke, disowned his jurisdiction, fell off from him; as was actually fulfilled, when Britain, Denmark, Sweden, and great part of Germany, France, Helvetia, and the low countries, withdrew from him. As a second effect following upon this, seven thousand were slain: in the original, it is names of men, signifying some persons of distinguished rank in this city; for many inhabitants in cities are destroyed by earthquakes, so, by this begun destruction of the Popish kingdoms, many men of distinguished note were either destroyed, or lost to the pope; particularly in the ruin and defeats of Popish armies; but especially, the destruction of his abbies, monasteries, cloisters, and other religious orders, and chiefly the Jesuits.

Doctor Gilbert Stewart, in his history of the reformation

reformation, page 124 and 125, says, " After taking the town of Perth, the zeal of the congregation was lifted up by this exploit. They thought of destroying the palace and abbey of Scoon, which were at a little distance from Perth. It was in vain that their leaders interested themselves to save them: even the rhetoric of John Knox was here ineffectual. An enraged multitude set fire to these stately edifices, and while the flames were ascending, an old woman was heard to exclaim, " See how the judgments of God are just! no authority is able to save, where he will punish. This place, in my memory, has been nothing else but a sink of whoredom. It is incredible to think, how many wives have been allured to adultery, and how many virgins have been deflowered, by the filthy beasts fostered in this den." This could not fail to vex them.

It is added, " the remnant were affrighted, " and gave glory to the God of heaven;" which cannot mean a thorough reformation, upon all the subjects of that kingdom; for, even when the vials are poured out, as in chap. xvi. they repented not; but, as we find at Christ's crucifixion, many were said to smite on their breasts, and to acknowledge him not only innocent, but more than man. So then, this begun overthrow of that kingdom of darkness, especially, the pulling down of their religious houses, formerly reckoned so sacred, will be so remarkable, that many, in appearance, shall renounce fellowship with Antichrist, and be made to confess, that nothing less than the mighty power of God could accomplish it. Here let us, with wonder and admiration, behold the amazing efficacy of God's word, and the happy success thereof, to the shaking of Antichrist's kingdom; which tumbles not down all at once, but by degrees, as it rose. The man of sin is to be

be consumed by the breath of Christ's mouth, at first, which is a gradual death ; though, at last, he shall be utterly destroyed, by the brightness of his coming. From hence we may comfortably conclude, that whatever ground Antichrist may seem to have gained, of late, in any place, that, nevertheless, he is in a deep consumption ; nay, far gone in it, and will languish more and more, till he draw his last breath : and, on the other hand, whatever clouds overspread the church of Christ, any where, they will soon all vanish ; and the true church is now fast advancing to the highest pitch of prosperity, and most flourishing condition, she shall ever attain on this side of heaven ; that is, to be under the blessed millennium : which probably began, with the resurrection of the witnesses, at the reformation, by the preaching of Luther, &c. Thus says the learned Dr Moir, in his *Myst. Inq.* page 477. " I doubt not but this resurrection of the witnesses, was a prediction of our Protestant reformation, begun at Spires in Germany, *anno* 1529, when several German princes and imperial cities, made a solemn protestation against the innovations and usurpations of the church of Rome, from whence comes the name of Protestants, which continues to this day. This therefore, says he, should make our reformation the more sacred, and prevent all persons, who wish well to our holy religion, from throwing dirt upon our first reformers, (as has been too liberally done of late), whose names ought to be had in honour, and will be so in the church of God, to all generations "

Verf. 14. " The second woe is past, and behold, the third woe cometh quickly." By this third woe, we are doubtless to understand the sounding of the seventh trumpet, which is to continue the plagues on the ope, till he be quite overthrown.

Before

Before we proceed to further explication of this and the following verses, we flatter ourselves, it will not be disagreeable to our readers, if we shall present them with a few lines, extracted from a most elegant and learned performance of Dr Gilbert Stewart. Page 1.

“ The traffic of indulgences, or the sale of the favour of heaven to sinners of every degree, first awakened the general attention of mankind to the spirit and tendency of the Romish faith. The consideration of particular abuses and errors, led to the discovery of the defects and infirmities of the whole system. Provoked by opposition, invited by curiosity, impelled by pride, and allured by the love of justice and truth, men inquired with anxiety and ardour, not only into the form and administration of the church, but into the doctrines which it taught. It was scrutinized on every side; and its corruptions and weaknesses, incapable of all defence and apology, roused indignation and contempt.

Popery is a species of religion, when examined by the principles of reason, appears to mock the judgment and capacity of men; and, when surveyed as a political establishment, it seems intended to disturb the tranquillity of society. The ingenuity of human wit, excited to contrive what is most extravagant, can, with difficulty, conceive inventions more absurd, or more romantic, than the merits of pilgrimages and penances, the confession and absolution of sins, purgatory, the invocation of saints, and adoration of images. Nor, in a political view, is the wildness it offers to observation less conclusive, or striking. A priest seated at Rome, claiming the prerogatives of Deity, looking down upon emperors and kings, and interfering, with heat and violence, in the temporal as well as spiritual concerns of independent nations, is a boundless vio-

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lation of property. Prelates subservient to a foreign potentate, with interests opposite to those of the community of which they are members, and assembling to deliberate in the senate, and to controul the authority of the prince and the magistrate, may justly be considered, as an institution in hostility to all the maxims of civil government. And by establishment of religious houses and monasteries, multitudes of individuals being condemned to confinement and indolence, society was deprived of the fruit and advantage of their industry and labour.

Time added to the original imperfections of the Romish system. The immense wealth accumulated by the clergy, co-operating with the law of celibacy, served to corrupt their morals. The extreme profligacy of their lives was still more offensive than the puerilities they inculcated. In their successful advances to grandeur, they acquired a long train of privileges and immunities; and while their imperiousness propagated distress and terror, new and constant pretences of encroachment presented themselves, to flatter and encourage their spirit of ambition and tyranny. Their power rose to the most exorbitant height, and they were studious to abuse it.

All the absurdities, which shock most the common understanding of mankind, all the vices and immoralities, which insult their sense of modesty and virtue, and all the stretches of authority which violate their pride, and overturn their interests, were displayed and exercised in the Romish religion, and in the transactions of its priesthood. When advanced to an extremity, beyond which they could be no longer endured, the proper check and correction were applied to them. They were traced to their sources, and explained in their consequences. Knowledge increased with inquiry, courage grew with victory; and the

the invention of the art of printing, submitting the speculations of the learned to the most general remark, the nations of Europe, starting from their lethargy into which they had fallen, were forward to attend to their dignity and importance; and, while they sought a remedy for the old superstitions, or acted to their overthrow, were strenuous to build up barriers to secure their civil rights.

Page 205. Amidst the felicities which were obtained, and the trophies which were won, we deplore the melancholy ravages of the passions, and weep over the ruins of ancient magnificence. But while the contentions and the ferments of men, even in the road to improvements and excellence, are ever destined to be polluted with mischief and blood; a tribute of the highest panegyric and praise is yet justly to be paid to the actors in the reformation. They gave way to the movements of a reasonable and liberal spirit: they taught the rulers of nations, that the obedience of the subject is the child of justice; and that men must be governed by their opinions, and by their reason. Their magnanimity is illustrated by great and glorious exploits; which, at the same time that they awaken admiration, are an example to support and animate virtue, in the hour of trial and peril. The existence of civil liberty, was deeply connected with the doctrines for which they contended and fought. While they treated with scorn an abject and cruel superstition, and lifted and sublimated the dignity of man, by calling his attention to a simpler and wiser theology, they were strenuous to give a permanent security to the political constitution of their state. The happiest and the best interests of society were the objects for which they buckled on their armour; and to wish and to act for their duration and stability, are perhaps the
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most important employment of patriotism and public affection. The reformation may suffer fluctuations in its forms ; but, for the good and prosperity of mankind, it is to be hoped, that it is never to yield, and to submit to the errors and superstitions which it overwhelmed ; that it is to guard with anxiety against their advances, to be scrupulously jealous, and to take an early alarm. In this enlightened age, of philosophy and reflection, it is difficult indeed to be conceived, that any serious attempts to establish them shall be made ; yet if, by some fatality in human affairs, such endeavours should actually be tried, and should succeed, it may be concluded, without the possibility of a doubt, that all the boasted freedom, which the reformation has fostered, would then perish for ever. The sentiment of liberty, and the fire of heaven, which our forefathers transmitted to their posterity, would expire, and be extinguished. Men would know the debasement of servility, and forget the honours of their kind : they would renounce their natural, their religious, and their political rights ; and be contented to creep upon the earth, to lick its dust, and to adore the caprices and the power of a tyrant."

We beg leave, with all due deference to his superior abilities, to differ, from this very learned and elegant author, only in one circumstance. He says, if Popery should be restored, all the boasted freedom, which the reformation has fostered, would then perish for ever : had he added, (which probably he meant), so long as Popery continued, we would have had no occasion for this remark. But we hope it is evident, beyond all possibility of a doubt, that Popish superstition, ignorance, and idolatry, shall never more pervade Europe, and continue in it, for any length of time. Whatever efforts are made for their restoration, will only be like the last pangs
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of a dying man, that their destruction may be the more grievously felt, and their final doom be more conspicuous.

Before we proceed to treat of the seventh trumpet, and its effects, it may perhaps not be amiss, to be a little more particular, with respect to the 1260 days, when the Gentiles trode under foot the outer court, and the prophets prophesied in sackcloth; Whether these days are expired? Whether the killing of the witnesses is past? And how and what way this prophecy is fulfilled?

We do not mean to affirm, that all trials and difficulties are over, with respect to the church of Christ; for, as we said above, she will have opposers and enemies to the end of time; yet, if we will seriously consider the particular event, and time, prophetically aimed at by the Holy Spirit in this prophecy, we will find, that these days are expired, and that the killing of the witnesses is in a great measure finished; also, that the seventh trumpet hath sounded, and we are supposed to live under it: which is contrary to the opinion of the learned bishop Newton, who supposeth we are living under the sixth trumpet, and that the seventh trumpet is not yet begun to sound. In order to shew the contrary of this, we humbly offer these following considerations:

1. The seventh trumpet's sounding, and the second woe's ending, do immediately, or without long interval, follow Antichrist's absolute dominion, and his treading under foot the holy city forty and two months; so then, the overturning of, and diminishing his power, must certainly infer the expiring of these forty-two months, and usher in the sounding of the seventh trumpet. For it is self evident, to any one acquainted with the state of the church, for more than 200 years past, that the pope's power is very different from what it was before that period. He may

now be said to be only a nominal head, seeing the Popish princes pay little or no regard to the thunders of the Vatican; likewise, the order of the Jesuits, the greatest support of the papal throne, is broke: besides, the Inquisition, that hellish engine of Popish cruelty, is little used, so far as we are informed, except in Spain and Portugal. Therefore, this cannot be called the time of his absolute and universal tyranny, but must be subsequent to it; especially, if we add, that human learning has made rapid progress, in Europe, for more than half a century past: but learning and Popery cannot well subsist together, one of whose chief tenets is, That ignorance is the mother of devotion. Even now, the dull phlegmatic Spaniards are emerging from ignorance and barbarity, in which they, and all Europe, were involved for several centuries.

Secondly, This ruin of Antichrist, as we have said, is not instantaneously accomplished; but is carried on by seven vials, as in chap. xvi. Seeing then, the expiring of the 1260 days of his absolute power, cannot be restricted to the time of his total fall; because, at the end of these, he makes war with the witnesses, and prevails, and that only a tenth part of the city falls, by their resurrection; and the seventh trumpet follows, which, with the vials, complete his ruin. The consequence is, that we must suppose the fulfilling of this prophecy, of the expiring of these days and the raising of the witnesses, from the begun decay, and ruin of Antichrist's kingdom, by the vials; and it is certain, that the vials belong to the seventh trumpet, which goeth along with, or immediately follows after, the ascension of the witnesses; and, it must follow of course, that this time falls under the seventh trumpet, and so is posterior to these former events, and supposes them accomplished.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, That time, when nations became the Lords, and when the temple is open, and the ark of the testimony is seen therein, belongs to the seventh trumpet : for, before the blowing of the seventh trumpet, and during these 1260 days, that the kingdoms of the earth were not the Lord's, that the temple was shut, and the ark of the testimony, or word of God, was not seen in it ; and it being now evident, that these events are fulfilled in our days ; we may therefore conclude the present time as belonging to that trumpet.

Several other considerations might be adduced, to set this matter in a clearer light ; but, for the sake of brevity, we shall proceed to explication of

Verse 15. " The seventh angel sounded, and " there were great voices in heaven," &c. We have formerly seen Antichrist treading on the necks of kings and emperors, killing the faithful witnesses of Christ, and not suffering their bodies to be buried. Now the scene is shifted, in a great measure ; for that monstrous tyrant, who ruled the nations of Europe for many centuries, must now be ruled himself with a rod of iron : and now, this seventh trumpet brings a third woe ; when the glorious reformation begins to dawn upon a benighted world, and gradually to increase till Antichrist be consumed ; and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.

It will be proper to observe, that this trumpet is nearly connected with, and comprehends the seven vials, as in chap. xv. 16. for the same events are more particularly described in them, which are but generally hinted here ; this is evident, if we consider the nature and titles of both. The seventh trumpet is called a woe, and the last woe ; the seven vials are called plagues, and the last plagues of God ; which is much the same with

with the last woe. Again, they have one object and design, and effects common to both; *viz.* executing the vengeance of God upon Antichrist and the kingdom of the beast, destroying them who destroyed the earth, and bringing light out of Antichristian darkeness. Also, their rise is at one time, the seventh trumpet sounding immediately, as said, after Antichrist's begun ruin; and, chap. xvi. the first vial is to be poured out, upon such as have the mark of the beast, whose kingdom is not wholly overturned till the sixth vial; and therefore must be strong, when the first begins. Lastly, by comparing this with chap. xv. which is as a preface to the seven vials, they will appear very parallel, and yet one and the same.

We shall no longer weary our reader's patience by attempting to prove, at greater length, that the seventh trumpet is cotemporary with the vials; as this is done, with great propriety and strength of argument, by the judicious and learned Durham, and others, to whom we have been much obliged in this essay.

This chapter concludes with a doxology, and solemn thanksgiving, for the glorious victory which our blessed Lord Jesus obtained over Antichrist. The persons giving thanks, are the four and twenty elders; by some, supposed, to be the whole church, ministers, and people. They are said to sit, that is, they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them; it also denotes the high honour to which they are exalted, formerly they stood as servants, now they sit as friends.

Here it may be asked, what it is they give thanks for? surely, nothing less than Christ's victory over that man of sin, and all his, and his people's enemies; if there be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, what universal joy must there be, when whole kingdoms and empires are converted,

verted, from Popish, Mahomedan, and Heathenish darkness, superstition, and idolatry?

The doxology follows, Lord God Almighty, we give thee thanks; for what? for this begun overthrow of the Pope, which thou wilt certainly carry on: thou being always the same God of truth, and as able to help thy church as ever; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. As if they had said, in the time of Antichrist's full power, when thy church was grievously oppressed and persecuted, thy power seemed to lie dormant, and thou didst not appear then to reign, permitting thy power to be obscured by his tyranny; but now, thou shewest thyself sovereign of the world, both King of saints, and King of nations.

In verse 18. These are said to be angry, *viz.* the idolatrous nations, who formerly persecuted the people of God: they not only fret because they are overcome, but they gnash their teeth, at the successful progress of the gospel; and because thy wrath is come, that is, the time to execute it upon all idolaters: and, the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and rewarded; that is, the time is now come, when these witnesses, who were civilly dead, and reckoned as dead by the world, shall revive again: or, it may mean those that were slain by Antichrist; the time is come, that their blood shall be avenged, and all thy faithful servants and followers recompensed, and rewarded. All those that fear thy name, both small and great: that is, all true believers, who have adhered unto Christ, shall be rewarded in God's time; and then he will destroy those bloody persecutors, who destroy the inhabitants of the earth, by persecutions and false doctrines.

Verse 19. "The temple of God was opened;" no doubt alluding to the temple of Jerusalem being often shut by idolatrous princes, such as Ahaz,

haz, and others; wherein the ark which contained the law of God, was not seen: but, Hezekiah and Josiah opened the temple, and restored the true worship of almighty God; in like manner, during the pope's reign, the temple of God was shut up, and his true worship suppressed; but now, since his begun fall, the temple is opened, the ark seen, and the pure word of God put in the hands of the laity, and explained by his sent servants, and more than ordinary power accompanying the same.

Before we enter upon the 12th, and following chapters, it will be proper to consider the state of the church under Popery; and the witnesses that were raised up, from time to time, to testify against the errors and idolatry of the church of Rome.

The eminently learned Bishop Newton, says "It appears then, that the greater part of this prophecy, relating to the witnesses, remains yet to be fulfilled:" but possibly, some may question whether any part of it hath been fulfilled? whether there have been any such persons as the witnesses, any true, and faithful servants of Jesus Christ, who have, in every age, professed doctrines contrary to those professed by the pope and the church of Rome? The truth of the fact will best appear, by a historical deduction; and, if it can be proved, that there have constantly been such witnesses, from the seventh century down to the reformation, during the most flourishing period of popery; I presume, there can be little doubt about the times preceding or following. As there hath been occasion to observe before, the seeds of Popery were sown, even in the apostle's time, but they were not grown up to maturity: the power of the pope, as a horn, or temporal prince, was not established till the eight century; and, from thence, it will be proper to begin

begin our deduction; when the beast began to reign, and the witnesses to prophecy in sackcloth.

Great as the power of the Latin church was grown, in the eight century, the Greek church still dissented from it, and opposed it. The emperor Leo Isauricus, and his son Constantine Copronymus, not only vigorously opposed the worship of images, but also denied the intercession of saints, and burnt and destroyed their relics. In the year 744, Constantine Copronymus held a general council, at Constantinople, of 338 bishops, who prohibited, unanimously, the worship of saints, as well as of images; and declared, that "only one image was constituted by Christ himself, namely, the bread and wine in the eucharist, which represents the body and blood of Christ:" than which, there cannot be a stronger declaration against the doctrine of transubstantiation, as well as against the worship of images. It is true, that the second council of Nice, in the year 787, restored and established the worship of images, and the pope ratified and confirmed it; but, nevertheless, great opposition was made to it by several churches in the west. Charlemain held a council at Frankfort, in the year 794, consisting of 300 bishops, of various nations; who condemned equally the second council of Nice, and the worship of images. The Caroline-books, were also set forth, under the name and authority of that great monarch; and the doctrines therein contained, of the sufficiency of the scriptures, of the worship of God alone, of prayers in the vulgar tongue, of the eucharist, of justification, of repentance, of pretended miracles, and various other points, are such as a Papist would abhor, and a Protestant would subscribe. Not to seek for further instances, the British churches lamented and execrated, the second council of Nice; and the famous Albin, or Alcuin, wrote

a letter against it, disproving and refuting it, by express authorities of holy Scripture; which letter was transmitted to Charles the great, in the name of the bishops, and other great men of the kingdom. Even in Italy, the council of Frojulo prescribed the use of no other creed, but that of the apostles; so that they had no conception of the necessity of so many additional articles, as have since been made by pope Pius IV. and received by the church. Some even of the Italian bishops assisted at the council of Frankfort, before mentioned; and, particularly, Paulinus, bishop of Aquileia, bore a principal part in it.

Popery prevailed in the ninth century, but yet did not without considerable opposition. Not only the emperors of the east, Nicephorus, Leo Armenius, Michael Balbus, Theophilus, and the emperors of the west, Charles the great, and Lewis the pious; but also several prelates and ecclesiastics, opposed the absolute power and supremacy of the pope, together with the worship of images, and invocation of saints and angels. The capitularies and edicts of Charles the great, and Lewis the pious, enjoined the use of the canonical Scripture, as the sole rule of faith, without any regard to human traditions, or apocriphal writings: private masses and pilgrimages, and other such superstitions, were forbidden by the same capitularies. Lewis the pious held a council at Paris, in the year 824, which agreed with the council of Frankfort, in rejecting the second council of Nice, and forbidding the worship of images. Agobard, archbishop of Lions, in his book against pictures and images, maintains, that we ought not to adore any image of God, but only that which is God himself, even his eternal Son; and that there is no other mediator between God and men, save Jesus Christ God and Man: so that it is no wonder that this
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book is condemned in the Index expurgatorius of the church of Rome. It was in this century, that the doctrine of transubstantiation was first advanced here, in the west, by Paschasius Radbertus, abbot of Corbie in France; but it was strenuously opposed by Rabanus Maurus, Bertramus, Johannes Scotus, and many other learned men of that age. Rabanus Maurus, archbishop of Mentz, passes this censure upon the novelty of the doctrine: "Some, says he, of late, not rightly conceiving concerning the sacrament of the body and blood of our Lord, have affirmed, that this is the very same body of our Lord, which was born of the Virgin Mary, and in which our Lord himself suffered, &c.; which error, we have opposed to the utmost of our power, &c. He thus expresseth his own sentiments, Our Lord would have the sacrament of his body and blood, be taken and eaten by the faithful; that, by a visible work, an invisible effect might appear: for as the material food outwardly nourishes and refreshes the body, so also, the word of God, inwardly nourishes and strengthens the soul. Again, the sacrament is reduced into the nourishment of the body; but by virtue of the sacrament, eternal life is obtained." Bertramus, or Batramus, as he is otherwise called, a monk of Corbie, wrote a book of the body and blood of our Lord; which he inscribed to the emperor Charles the bald. The emperor had inquired of him, whether the same body, which was born of Mary, and suffered, and was dead and buried, and which sitteth at the right hand of the Father, is what is daily taken in the mouth of the faithful, by the mystery of the sacrament in the church? and Bertram answers, "That the difference between them is as great, as between the pledge and the thing for which the pledge is delivered; as great as between the image, and

the thing whose image it is ; as great, as between the representation and the reality." He says, in several places, " That the bread and wine are figuratively the body of Christ, spiritually, not corporally, in figure ; in image, in mystery, not in truth, or real existence, or presence of the substance." John Scot, the famous Irishman, (for the Irish were the Scots of those times), wrote also a book of the eucharist, by the command of Charles the bald : and therein he asserted, " that the sacrament of the altar, is not the true body, nor true blood of our Lord, but only the memorial of the true body, and of the true blood. He was, after this, invited into England, by king Alfred ; was preferred by him, and honoured with the title of martyr after his death ; which is, at least, a strong presumption, that the church of England had not, at that time, received the doctrine of transubstantiation. In Italy itself, Angilbertus, archbishop of Milan, would not acknowledge the supremacy of the pope ; nor did the church of Milan submit to the see of Rome, till two hundred years afterwards. But no one was more willing, as indeed no one of that age was more able, to stem the torrent of superstition, than Claude, bishop of Turin, in his numerous writings and comments upon Scripture. He asserted the equality of all the apostles with St Peter ; and maintained, that Jesus Christ was the only head of the church : he overthrew the doctrine of merit, and all pretences to supererogation : he rejected traditions in matters of religion, held the church to be subject to error, and denied the use of prayers for the dead : he proposed the doctrine of the eucharist, in a manner totally different from Paschasius Radbertus, and entirely conformable to the sense of the ancient church : he opposed, with all his might, the worship of saints, of relics, of images ; together

gether with pilgrimages, penances, and other superstitions of the like kind. He may, in a manner, be said to have sown the seeds of the reformation, in his diocese of Turin; and his doctrine took such deep root, especially in the valleys of Piedmont, that they continued to flourish there for some centuries; as Papists themselves acknowledge.

The tenth century, even the writers of the Romish communion lament, and describe as the most debauched and wicked, the most illiterate and ignorant age, since the coming of Christ. Genebrard says, "This is called the unhappy age, being destitute of men famous for wit and learning; as also of famous princes and popes; in which, scarce any thing was done worthy of the memory of posterity." He subjoins, "But chiefly unhappy, in this one thing, that for almost 150 years, about 50 popes totally degenerated from the virtue of their ancestors; being more like apostates than apostles. Baronius himself, denominates it an iron, a leaden, and an obscure age: and declares, that Christ was then, as it appears, in a very deep sleep, when the ship was covered with waves; and what seemed worse, when the Lord was thus asleep, there were wanting disciples, who, by their cries, might awaken him; being themselves all fast asleep." It is not to be wondered, that in so long and dark a night as this, while all were asleep, the subtle enemy should sow his tares in great abundance. However, there were some few, like lights shining in a dark place, who remonstrated against the degeneracy and superstition of the times. The resolutions and decrees of the councils of Frankfort and Paris, against the worship of images, had still some force and influence in Germany, in France, in England, and other countries. In the former part

of this century, in the year 909, a council was held at Frosly, a village near Soissons in France : and having made several wise and good regulations, they concluded, with a profession of the things, which Christians ought to believe and practise : and in that profession, are none of these things which constitute the sum of Popish doctrine ; nothing of the pope's being head of the church, nothing of the daily sacrifice of the mass, or of purgatory, or of the worship of creatures, or of commentitious sacraments, or of confession to the priest ; but of pure and sincere confession to God : so much did this council differ from the spirit and principles of the council of Trent. Many churches still retained the use of the Scriptures, in the vulgar tongue : and in England, particularly, Athelstein caused them to be translated into the Anglo-Saxon idiom."

Guthry, in his history of Scotland, gives a particular account of the Culdees, (who, he says, were all presbyters), that he supposes were the first regular clergy in Scotland ; and that they continued till the year 1273, making vigorous defence against the invasions of the Romish church. Great opposition was also made, in several countries, to the celibacy of the clergy ; and several councils were held upon the controversy, between the monks and the secular clergy ; and particularly in England, where Elfere, earl of Mercia, expelled the monks out of the monasteries in that province, and introduced the clergy with their wives. Many too, even in this age, denied the doctrine of transubstantiation. Heriger, abbot of Lobes, near Liege, wrote expressly against it, as did also Alfric in England ; whose homily for Easter used publicly to be read in the churches. His principal aim therein is to prove, " that we taste the body of Christ, and drink

drink his blood, when with true faith we partake of that holy sacrament ; the bread and wine cannot, by any benediction, be changed into the body and blood of Christ ; they are indeed the body and blood of Christ, yet not corporally, but spiritually :” with much more to the same purpose. He wrote also two epistles, the one addressed to Wulfin bishop of Shirburn, and the other to Wulstan archbishop of York, wherein he asserts the same doctrine.

Much of the same complexion with the tenth, was the eleventh century, equally sunk in profligacy, superstition, and ignorance ; but yet, not without some superior spirits to bear testimony against it. The papal power was, in this century, carried beyond all bounds, by the ambition and arrogance of the reigning popes ; and particularly, by the violence and haughtiness of Gregory VII. whose proper name was Hildebrand, or Hellbrand, as he hath often been denominated. But yet there were emperors and councils, who strenuously opposed the pretensions and usurpations of the see of Rome ; and these contests and struggles, between the popes and emperors, about the right of investitures and other articles, make a principal part of the history of this age. Our kings, devoted as they were to the religion, yet would not entirely submit to the authority of the bishop of Rome ; but contradicted it in several instances. When William I. was required by the pope to pay him homage, he made answer, “ to pay homage I have been unwilling, nor am I willing ; for neither did I promise it, neither do I find, that my predecessors paid it to your predecessors ” His son, William Rufus, exerted somewhat of the same spirit, and insisted, that the pope, without his permission, had no manner of jurisdiction in England. Early in this century, there appeared

at Orleans some heretics, as they were called, who maintained, that the consecration of the priest, could not change the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ ; and that it was unprofitable to pray to saints and angels : these were condemned by the council of Orleans, in the year 1017. Not long after them, appeared other heretics, of the same stamp, in Flanders ; who were also condemned by the synod of Arras, in the year 1025. They came, originally, from Italy, where they had been the disciples of Gundulphus ; and they are said to have admitted no scripture, but the gospels and the apostolical writings ; to have denied the reality of the body and blood of Christ in the eucharist ; to have attributed no religious worship to the holy confessors ; none to the cross, none to images, nor to temples nor altars ; and to have asserted, that there was no purgatory ; and that penances after death, could not absolve the deceased from their sins. Other tenets were ascribed to them, really heretical ; and perhaps they might hold some errors, as well as some truths ; or perhaps their adversaries, as it hath been their usual artifice, might lay things to their charge, merely to blacken and defame them.

Not long after these, arose the famous Berengarius, a native of Tours, and archdeacon of Angers, who more professedly wrote against the doctrine of transubstantiation ; and also called the church of Rome, a church of malignants, the council of vanity, and the seat of Satan. It is true, he was compelled, by the authority of the popes and councils, to renounce, abjure, and burn his writings. But, this was all a forced, and not in the least a voluntary recantation : as soon as he recanted, he relapsed again ; he returned as a dog to his vomit, as a cotemporary Popish historian expresseth it ; he lived, and died in the
same

same sentiments. His heresy was, from him, called the Berengarian heresy; and his followers were so numerous, that, as old historians relate, he had corrupted almost all the French, Italians, and English, with his depravities. When Gregory VII. had, both by letters, and by a council held at Rome, in the year 1074, strictly forbidden the marriage of the clergy, it raised great commotions among the ecclesiastics in Germany; who not only complained of the pope, for imposing this yoke, but likewise accused him, of advancing a notion insupportable, and contrary to the words of our Saviour, who saith, "that all are not able to live in continence;" and to the words of the apostle, who ordereth "those, who have not the gift of continence, to marry." They added, that this law, inverting the ordinary course of nature, would be the cause of great disorders; that they would rather renounce the priesthood than marriage; and the pope should provide, if he could, angels to govern the church, since he refused to be served by men. This was the language of these corrupt ecclesiastics, as Dupin hath called them: but, the decree of the pope was no less opposed in France, in Flanders, in Italy, and England, than in Germany. A council was held at Winchester, in the year 1076, wherein it was decreed, indeed, that no canon should marry; but the priests in the country, who were already married, were allowed to cohabit with their wives, or to forbear the exercise of their office. Whereupon, Mr Collier hath made this just reflection; "From hence it appears, that the papal supremacy had not reached its zenith in this country; and that the English bishops did not believe the patriarchal power arbitrary, and unlimited; but that a national church had some reserves of liberty, and might dissent

dissent from the constitutions of the see of Rome, upon occasion.

Europe, hitherto, was involved in the dark night of Popery, with only some stars, appearing here, and there, in the horizon; but, in the twelfth century, there began to be visible, some streaks of the morning light, some dawnings of a reformation. Here in England, during the reign of Henry II. the famous constitutions of Clarendon, were sworn to, and signed, both by the clergy and the laity, in recognition of the rights of the crown; particularly, forbidding all appeals to Rome, without the king's licence; and appointing the trial of criminal clerks before secular judges. Fluentius, bishop of Florence, taught publicly, that Antichrist was born, and come into the world: whereupon pope Paschal II. went to Florence, held a council there, in the year 1105, and severely reprimanded the bishop, and strictly forbade him to preach any such doctrine. St Bernard himself, devoted as he was, and bigotted to the church of Rome, in other respects; yet, inveighed loudly against the corruption of the clergy, and the pride and tyranny of the popes; saying, that they were the ministers of Christ, and served Antichrist; that nothing remained, but that the man of sin should be revealed, that the beast in the Apocalypse occupied St Peter's chair, with other expressions to the same effect. So that some true notion of Antichrist began to spread, even among the members of the church of Rome; and no wonder that it prevailed among those, who more directly opposed the doctrines of that church. Peter de Bruis, and Henry his disciple, taught in several parts of France, that the body and blood of Christ were not offered in the theatrical mass; that the doctrine of the change of the substances in the sacrament is false; that sacrifices, that is, masses prayers, alms, and other
works

works of the living for the dead, are foolish and impious, and profit them nothing; that priests, and monks, ought rather to marry than burn; that crosses are not to be adored, or venerated, and so many crosses serving to superstition, ought rather to be removed than retained: and they both were martyrs, the one being burnt, and the other imprisoned for life, on account of their doctrines. Arnold of Brescia held opinions contrary to those of the church, concerning the sacrament, and preached mightily against the temporal power and jurisdiction of the pope and the clergy; for which he was burnt at Rome, in the year 1155, and his ashes were thrown into the Tyber, to prevent the people from expressing any veneration for his relics. But the true witnesses, and, as I may say, the Protestants of this age, were the Waldenses and Albigenes, who began to be famous at this time; and, being dispersed in various places, were distinguished by various appellations. Their first and proper name seemeth to have been Vallenses, or inhabitants of the valleys; and so saith one of their oldest writers, Ebrard of Bethune, who wrote in the year 1212; "They call themselves Vallenses, because they abide in the valley of tears;" alluding to their situation in the valley of Piedmont. They were called Albigenes, from Alby, a city in the southern parts of France, where also great numbers of them were situated. They were afterwards denominated Valdenses or Waldenses, from Peter Valdo or Waldo, a rich citizen of Lyons, and a considerable leader of the sect. From Lyons too, they were called Leonists; and Cathari, from the professed purity of their life and doctrine, as others since had the name of puritans. As there was a variety of names, so there might be some diversity of opinions among them; but that they were not guilty of Manicheism, and other abominable

minable heresies,, which have been charged upon them, is certain and evident from all the remains of their creeds, confessions, and writings. The bishop proceeds to give an account of their opinions, which are perfectly agreeable to those of the reformation. He then produces the testimonies of three unexceptionable authors concerning them, *v.z.* Reinerius, Thuanus, and Mezeray. Reinerius flourished about the year 1254; and his testimony is the more remarkable, as he was a dominican, and inquisitor general."

In the thirteenth century, he observes " that the Waldenses, and Albigenses, had spread, and prevailed so far, and were still making such rapid progress; that the pope, after trying all other methods, at last published a croisade against them; so that, after many of them were massacred and put to flight, they dispersed, some to Provence, others to Calabria, part into Germany; and fixed their abode in Bohemia, Poland, and Livonia, and into Britain.

In the beginning of this century Almeric and his disciples made their appearance, who were condemned in the second council of Paris, in the year 1209; these differed little from the Waldenses. The bishop gives a long list of many others, in this and the following century, who wrote and testified against the corruptions of the Romish church.

Two things, he says, contributed much to the revival of learning in the fifteenth century; the Greeks flying with their books from Constantinople, which the Turks had taken, and the invention of printing. As learning more revived, so the truth prevailed more; and, the more the truth prevailed, the fury of persecution increased in proportion. As Wickliff, John Hufs, Jerome of Prague, Luther, Calvin, and many others, are well known to most people: ' It would carry us far

far beyond our bounds, if we should give a minute detail of all the glorious exploits of these heroes, who sealed the truth with their blood.

C H A P. XII.

Verse 1. " And there appeared a great wonder " in heaven," &c.

This and the two following chapters, are here inserted, by way of explication of what went before; *viz.* of the seals and trumpets. The history of the church, from John's time, to the end of the world, is concisely narrated in the seals, trumpets, and vials; but in this, as well as several explanatory prophecies, her condition is more fully and distinctly described, that we may be better able to comprehend what is contained briefly in others.

In order then, to comprehend the true meaning of this chapter, we may observe, in the first place, that it describeth the first trials of the church, from the apostles time, till Antichrist made his public appearance; and is cotemporary with the seals, and the first four trumpets; therefore it divides itself into two parts, as will appear in the sequel.

In the next place, what is spoken of the dragon watching the woman and the child, ver. 4. and his war, ver. 7.; also the woman's flight, ver. 6. which is again repeated, ver. 14. do not signify two different battles of the church; but the same trials, which are at first touched only in a short summary manner, and by way of anticipation, and is afterwards more particularly resumed. So that the dragon's war with Michael, is the same as his watching the woman, and attempting to destroy the man child; and her flight in ver. 6. is the same with that in ver. 14: otherwise it would be very difficult to shew two successive flights of the same continuance; how she returned,

returned, or when, or how she did flee, ver. 6. when yet wings are but given her, ver. 14. &c.

Concerning the design of the first part of this chapter to vers. 13. we may observe, that it points out the first sufferings of the Christian church, and the devil's seeking to destroy her seed, which is Christ's mystical body, with her deliverance from them. This cannot be understood of Christ personally, or of the Jewish church; for these things were past long before, and, in that case, would have been recorded as historical facts already past, which is inconsistent with the nature of prophecy: especially, this book of the Apocalypse, which, as we have often observed, gives a particular account of the disasters that were to befall the church, as well as her own prosperous condition, to the end of the world.

As we have taken a cursory view of the seals and trumpets already, we shall leave this chapter, without any further explication, and proceed to the next.

C H A P. XIII.

Verse 1. "And I," says the beloved apostle, "stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns," &c.

It is common in the prophets, especially in Daniel, to typify temporal monarchies by great beasts, as chap. vii. and viii.; and these beasts do not mean particular persons, but a succession of the same line, or kind, on the throne; and it is usual, in this prophecy, to borrow types from him. Only sometimes, in the Old Testament, what is said of temporal enemies, or difficulties in the church, is applied to spiritual and secret enemies in this; as many things, literally agreeing to Antiochus, are applied to Antichrist in this

this book. So by beast here is meant, a state of great power, and violence against the church, continued, not in one single person, in one generation, but for a very long continuance, by a series of one combined body, successively, under one head; this is applicable to the Heathen emperors and empire, in the first place, and to the pope and his spiritual hierarchy, in the last. Again, one state, thing, or person, will be exhibited in Scripture by divers types and beasts, so in Daniel, the Persian empire is described by a bear, and the Grecian by a leopard. In chap. viii. the Persian by a ram, and the Grecian by a he-goat. Chap. vii. the kingdom of the Selucidæ, (though but a branch of the Grecian), is described by a beast quite different from the other; because different only in some things. Which shews, that though the types be different, yet the party signified may be one considered in divers respects; in which sense, this same Antichrist is called the eight beast, as in chap. xvii. and yet there also, but one of the seven, and the seventh, though in appearance different from the seventh.

The state and power mentioned here, is that which has Rome for its metropolis, during its standing, as it was of the Heathen emperors before; for the dragon placeth his deputy in the same seat, where his deputy the emperor sat before, as in verse 2.

This seat, in chap. xvii. is described, first, By its natural situation, at the time when John wrote, having seven mountains, vers. 9. 2. In its political government, being seven sorts, including this beast. 3. In its power over the kings of the earth, vers. 18; and it is easy to determine, what is and hath been the state which both had, and now have.

Further, this wonderful beast, does not comprehend the Roman empire simply, as under any

head, but as under its seventh and last head, or government; for the beast has, in all, seven heads, as considered in its complex body; yet, seeing these heads are successive, and the removing of one introduceth another, it is only under one head at a time. Therefore that which was in John's time being the sixth, as in chap. xvii.; and this having the sixth wounded and healed again, before he exercise his power, we may conclude, that this beast is the Roman empire, under its seventh and last government.

Hence there is a remarkable difference between the beast here, and that in chap. xii. though it point out the same empire, with seven heads and ten horns, yet there the heads are crowned, and the horns were not; because then the Cæsars reigned, and the provinces were governed by their deputies. But here the horns are crowned, shewing that the instruments used by this beast have sovereign power; which is more distinctly explained in chap. xvii. This power is the same Roman empire, or that government of it which is the seventh and eighth. All the effects agree to the beast, after its head is healed, and it has got the throne and seat of the dragon,

Once more, we shall make a distinction between this beast's beginning to rise, and his public appearance; because they are in themselves different events, and have different times; and we imagine, that it is the public appearance and manifestation of him to the world, that is pointed at in this place; which differs from its begun underhand working; even as the church's begun flight is different in its rise, from its concealed private condition at the lowest: for, as the beast riseth, she flieth, and her flight increaseth with his rising. His beginning appears to be after open persecution; for the dragon quitteth his seat to him, therefore this cannot be the Hea-
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then persecuting emperors, but some succeeding them, and that immediately; for this throne is not left vacant, but the one resigneth it to the other. Again, it commenceth whenever the woman begins to flee; that is, immediately when Satan is dethroned, he endeavours to advance the beast, and from that time he gradually increaseth; for, vers. 5. his power and commission is for forty-two months, the time her prophets are clothed in sackcloth: and the final period is alike to both; for no sooner does the beast begin to be destroyed, than her prophets put off their sackcloth, vers. 11. 16.

It cannot be the French or German emperors, that is meant here; for they did not so soon exist. The discovery of this beast will be found to commence, after the devil's disappointment of his design to drown the woman; that is, when gross heresies prevailed not to gain his end; and it was also cotemporary with the healing of the deadly wound, which the sixth head had gotten; and is therefore the very healing of it, in Rome's recovering a public court and authority by the popes, which, by the Cæsars and emperors becoming Christian, and removing their court from it, had left to them. Under Popery, it again received an head, and the same title of blasphemy on it which it had under its former masters; which, as we have frequently observed, happened a little after the year 600; when both Rome was peaceably possessed by the popes, and idolatry was introduced into the church. Besides, in this state, the horns were crowned; which, in chap. xvii. 12. pointed out the erection of new kingdoms, not then in being; by which it is evident, that the discovery of Antichrist, and the erection of kingdoms out of the empire, must be at the same time.

From what has been said, we may safely conclude, that it is not any state or branch of the

civil Roman empire, that is meant here; not the Heathen state, not the Grecian emperors, who resided at Constantinople, (having quitted Rome to give place to the beast); for they continued not 42 months; nor was there always so good friendship between them and the popes, as between the two beasts mentioned here: the emperors being always jealous of the popes, and frequently curbing their power by their lieutenants; and the popes, on the other hand, issued out their anathemas against the emperors, because they vigorously opposed idolatry, praying to saints, &c.

Again, this beast makes no appearance till the wound be healed; but, in the Heathen emperors time, it was only hurt. Neither can this be a succession of French, introduced by Stephanus, the third after Charles Martel, Pepin, &c. who were invited to defend the empire against the Goths, Vandals, and Lombards, who at that time overpowered Italy: as also, for checking the exarchs of Ravenna, who, as deputies of the Grecian emperors, plundered and spoiled Italy very much: but these emperors had no being till the year 650, or 660, or upwards; which cannot agree to the time of this beast's rise. The same reason will cut off the German emperors, or the elective succession, introduced by Otho III. and Charles IV. who may be accounted among the chief horns of this beast; crowned by him, to answer his hellish purposes, and are among those who gave their power to this beast, but cannot be the beast himself.

Further, by this beast, is understood Antichrist in his kingdom; which seems evident, from all the characters given; for first, he succeeds to the dragon's seat; secondly, his rise, reign, and continuance, agree to the church's low condition for the 42 months, beginning and ending with it. He is worshipped with a divine adoration; for sitting in the temple of God, he exalteth

exalteth himself above all that is called God; and his worshippers address him, Our sovereign lord, god, the pope; he hath also absolute dominion, and takes a title to himself, over all nations, kindreds, and tongues, &c. Their submission to him is voluntary, and with admiration, which was never to any civil state; he hath likewise, crowned horns and kings under him, who reverence him: but all that is mentioned here agrees to one beast, and in one state or condition; viz under the last head, when the wound the sixth head had got was healed; and the beast thus healed in his head, is admired, worshipped, followed, &c. To him is given power over the saints, in allusion to Antiochus; as is ordinary in the case of Antiochus: so then, the pope is either no head of this beast, or he is described by him, who thus long continueth, and in and by whom the dragon is again worshipped by the men of the earth; all which, can agree to no other.

In short, the Roman empire is described here, as headed by the pope of Rome, having now the sixth head, which was wounded by the downfall of heathenish idolatry, again healed by the pope becoming the seventh, (for there are but seven); and to this empire, under this head, all things agree which are mentioned in this place; considering it as representing that same civil state, now the seventh time carrying a head of blasphemy; yet again repeated under another type, that it may be known not to be the same, though on the same beast with that which was wounded, not of the same kind altogether with the former.

In the last place, we maintain, that these two beasts are only one; the last consisting of no different state, but the same with the former, under a different notion. Therefore, there is no particular description of its parts or rise, in respect

of time and continuance, but it becometh one in all these with the former. Now, in this chapter, there is but one name, one character, and one beast or number always mentioned; they have also one see, one commission, &c. and are designed by one beast, chap. xviii. of one, chap. xi. 7. Likewise the woman, that is said to sit on the beast, (vers. 3.) is called this very city or empire Rome, vers. 18. The woman is, doubtless, the Romish or Antichristian church; but that woman, (vers. 18.) is not a government or state, distinct from that civil or Antichristian state, but the very same, supported by its civil power; therefore they are one.

Thus we see, every one of these conclusions succeed each other; if it be not the civil state, typified by the first beast, it must be that of Antichrist, and so both one, for the last is he. We may add, that, in the following chapters, whenever the decline of Antichrist is mentioned, or the destruction of his kingdom, it is done under the name of the beast; and only as one, as is evident by these and the like phrases. Who worship him, who had got the victory over him, his seat, &c. chap. xvi.; which by all commentators, is meant of Rome: therefore, these two must be one, and such a one, as hath one seat at Rome over all nations, with a slavish, superstitious, or rather idolatrous dependence on him: consequently, when he is here, or elsewhere, (through this book), represented as a woman carried by the beast and false prophet, it is not as if they were two things, but divers types, pointing out one diversely considered; such as Antichrist's two swords, civil and ecclesiastical; or his power and violence as a beast; also, his hypocrisy and dissimulation, as a false prophet. For it cannot be supposed, that one can have such alliance and likeness to Antichrist in all things.

things, as this beast rising with him, falling with him, reigning with him, falling and going to the pit with him; especially, as two heads are inconsistent together, upon one seat, at the same time; as is said.

This is acknowledged by Bellarmine, book III. chap. xv. concerning the pontiffs. "The same Antichrist, says he, is expressed by the two beasts; by the one, because of his kingly power and tyranny, whereby he shall force men violently; by the other, because of his magic art, whereby he shall seduce men;" and he alledgeth Bupertius for the author of this expression. In the same place too, he calls Antichrist king of the Roman empire, but not under the name of emperor. This also agrees well, with the titles ordinarily assumed by the pope; who is called a good prince, whereby he exerciseth temporal arms; and a holy pope, that he may exercise spiritual ones.

"It is remarkable, says bishop Newton, that the dragon had seven crowns upon his heads; but the beast hath ten crowns upon his horns; so that there had been, in the mean while, a revolution of power, from the heads of the dragon to the horns of the beast; and the sovereignty, which before was exercised by Rome alone, was now transferred, and divided among ten kingdoms: but the Roman empire was not divided into ten kingdoms, till after it was become Christian. Although the heads had lost their crowns, yet they still retained the names of blasphemy. In all its heads, in all its forms of government, Rome was still guilty of idolatry and blasphemy. Imperial Rome was called, and delighted to be called, the eternal city, the heavenly city, the goddess of the earth, the goddess; and had her temples, and altars, with incense and sacrifices, offered up to her: and how papal Rome, likewise hath arrogated to herself, divine titles and honours

nours, there will be a fitter occasion of shewing, in the following description.

As Daniel's fourth beast, chap. vii. 7. was without a name, and devoured, and brake in pieces the three former; so this beast, vers. 2. is also without a name, and partakes of the nature and qualities of the three former; having the body of a leopard, which was the third beast, or Grecian empire; and the feet of a bear, which was the second beast, or Persian empire; and the mouth of a lion, which was the first beast, or Babylonian empire; and consequently, this must be the same as Daniel's fourth beast, or the Roman empire. But still it is not the same beast, the same empire entirely, but with some variation; and the dragon gave him his power, or his armies, and his seat, or his imperial throne; and great authority or jurisdiction over all the parts of his empire. The beast, therefore, is the successor and substitute of the dragon, or of the idolatrous Heathen empire: and what other idolatrous power hath succeeded to the Heathen emperors in Rome, all the world is a judge and a witness. The dragon having failed, in his purpose of restoring the old Heathen ido'atry, delegates his power to the beast; and thereby introduces a new species of idolatry, nominally different, but essentially the same, the worship of angels and saints, instead of the gods and demigods of antiquity.

Another mark whereby the beast was peculiarly distinguished, was (ver. 3.) "one of his heads, as it were, wounded to death." It will appear hereafter, that this head was the sixth head; for five were fallen, (chap. xvii. 10.) before John's time: and the sixth head was that of the Cæsars or emperors; there having been before, kings, consuls, dictators, decimvirs, and military tribuns, with consular power. This sixth head was, as it were, wounded to death, when the Roman empire

empire was overturned by the northern nations; and an end was put to the very name of emperor in Momillus Augustulus: or rather, as the government of the Gothic was much the same as that of emperors, with only a change of the name; this head was more effectually wounded to death, when Rome was reduced to a poor dukedom, and made tributary to the exarchate of Ravenna: and Sigonius, who hath written the best of these times, and of these affairs, includes the history of the Gothic kings, in his history of the western empire. But not only, one of his heads was as it were wounded to death, but his deadly wound was healed. If it was the sixth head that was wounded, that wound could not be healed by the rising of the seventh head, as interpreters commonly conceive; the same head which was wounded must be healed: and this was effected, by the pope and people of Rome revolting from the exarch of Ravenna, and proclaiming Charles the great, Augustus, and emperor of the Romans. Here the wounded and imperial head was healed again, and hath subsisted ever since. At this time, partly through the pope, and partly through the emperor, supporting each other, the Roman name again became formidable: and all the world wondered after the beast; and (ver. 4.) they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast, and they worshipped the beast, saying; "Who is like unto the beast, who is able to make war with him? No kingdom or empire, was like that of the beast; it had not a parallel upon earth, and it was in vain for any to resist or oppose it; it prevailed, and triumphed over all: and, all the world, in submitting thus to the beast, in effect, submit again to the religion of the dragon, it being the old idolatry with only new names. The worshipping of demons and idols is, in effect, the worshipping of devils.

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Wonderful as the beast was, his words and actions, (ver. 5. 8.) are no less wonderful. He perfectly resembles the little horn in Daniel. As the little horn (Dan. vii. 8. 25.) had a mouth speaking great things, and spake great words against the Most High; so there was given unto the beast, a mouth speaking great things, and he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God. As the little horn (Dan. vii. 21.) made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; so it was given unto the beast, to make war with the saints, and to overcome them. As the little horn prospered, (Dan. vii. 25.) until a time, and times, and the dividing of time, that is, three prophetic years and an half; so power was given unto the beast to continue to practise and prosper, forty and two months; which is exactly the same portion of time as three years and an half. We see that not only the same images, but almost the same words are employed; and, the portraits being so perfectly alike, it might fairly be presumed, if there was no other argument, that they were both drawn for the same person; and, having before clearly discovered who sat for the one, we cannot now be at any loss to determine who sat for the other. It is the Roman beast in his last state, or under his seventh head: and he hath a mouth speaking great things, and blasphemies; and what can be greater things and blasphemies, than the claims of universal bishop, infallible judge of all controversies, sovereign of kings, and disposer of kingdoms, vicegerent of Christ, and God upon earth. He hath also power to continue, or rather to practise, to prevail, and prosper, forty and two months. Some read *poiesai polemon*, to make war, not rightly understanding, I suppose, what was meant by *poiesai*, alone; but it signifies to practise, to prevail, and prosper, as the word, *וַיַּעַשׂ* and *poiesai* are used by Daniel, and the

the Greek translators. It doth not therefore follow, that the beast is to continue to exist for no longer a term ; but he is to practise, to prosper, and to prevail, forty and two months ; as the holy city (chap. ix. 2.) is to be trodden under foot of the Gentiles forty and two months, which are the 1260 days, or years, of the reign of Antichrist. But, if by the beast be understood the Heathen Roman empire, that, instead of subsisting 1260, did not subsist 400 years after the date of this prophecy.

After this general account of the blasphemies, and exploits of the beast, there follows a specification of the particulars ; he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God. Blasphemy against God may be said to be of two kinds, not only speaking dishonourably of the supreme being, but likewise, attributing to the creature what belongs to the Creator ; as in idolatry. which is often the sense of the word in scripture ; as in Is. lxxv. 7. " they have burnt incense upon the mountains, and " blasphemed me upon the hills," and in several other places. He blasphemes the name of God, by assuming the divine titles and honours to himself ; and, as it is expressed in the wisdom of Solomon, by ascribing unto stones and stocks, the incommunicable name. He blasphemes the tabernacle of God, his temple, and his church, by calling true Christians, who are the house of God, schismatics and heretics, and by anathematizing them accordingly. He blasphemes them that dwell in heaven, angels and glorified saints, by idolatrous worship, and impious adoration ; and disgraces their acts, and vilifies their memories, by fabulous legends, and lying miracles.

So much for his blasphemies ; nor are his exploits less extraordinary. It was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them : and who can make any computation, or
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even frame any conception, of the numbers of pious Christians, who have fallen a sacrifice to the bigotry and cruelty of Rome? Mede, upon the place, hath observed, from good authorities, that in the war with the Albigenſes, and Waldenſes, there perished of theſe poor creatures, in France alone, a million. From the first institution of the Jesuits, to the year 1480, that is, little more than thirty years, nine hundred thousand orthodox Christians were slain. In the Netherlands alone, the duke of Alva boasted, that, within a few years, he had dispatched to the amount of thirty-six thousand souls, and thoſe all by the hands of the common executioner. In the ſpace of ſcarce thirty years, the inquisition destroyed, by various kinds of tortures, an hundred and fifty thousand Christians. Saunders himſelf, confeſſeth, that an innumerable multitude of Lollards and Sacramentarians were burnt, throughout all Europe; who yet, he ſays, were not put to death by the pope and biſhops, but by the civil magiſtrates; which perfectly agrees with the prophecy; for, of the ſecular beaſt it is ſaid, that he ſhall make war with the ſaints, and overcome them; no wonder, that by theſe means, he ſhould obtain an univerſal authority over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations, and eſtabliſh his dominion in all the countries of the weſtern empire; and, that they ſhould not only ſubmit to his decrees, but even adore his perſon; except the faithful few, whoſe names, as citizens of heaven, were inrolled in the registers of life. Let the Romaniſts boast therefore, that their's is the catholic church, and univerſal empire; this is ſo far from being any evidence of the truth, that it is the very brand infixed by the ſpirit of prophecy.

It was cuſtomary with our Saviour, when he would have his auditors pay a particular attention to what he had been ſaying, to add, “ He
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" who hath ears to hear, let him hear." St. John repeats the same admonition, at the end of each of the seven epistles to the seven churches of Asia; and here, in the conclusion of his description of the beast, (ver. 9.) " If any man have an ear, let him hear:" and certainly, the description of the beast is deserving of the highest attention, upon many accounts; and particularly, because the right interpretation of the Apocalypse turneth upon it, as one of its main hinges. It is added, by way of consolation to the church, that these enemies of God and of Christ, represented, under the character of the beast, shall suffer the law of retaliation; and be as remarkably punished, and tormented themselves, as they punished, and tormented others; (ver. 10.) he who leadeth into captivity, shall go into captivity; he who killeth with the sword, must be killed with the sword. Such a promise might administer some comfort, and indeed it would be wanted; for the patience and the faith of the saints would be tried to the utmost during the reign of the beast. Here is the patience, and the faith of the saints: of all the trials and persecutions of the church, this would be the most severe, and exceed those of primitive times, both in degree and in duration.

From the description of the ten-horned beast, or Roman state in general, the prophet passeth to that of the two-horned beast, or Roman church in particular. The beast with ten crowned horns is the Roman empire, as divided into ten kingdoms; the beast with two horns like a lamb, is the Roman hierarchy, or body of the clergy, regular or secular. This beast is otherwise called the false prophet, as we shall see in several instances: than which, there cannot be a plainer or stronger argument, to prove, that false doctors or teachers were particularly designed. For the false prophet, no more than the beast, is a single

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man;

man; but a body or succession of men, propagating false doctrines, and teaching lies for sacred truths. As the first rose out of the sea, that is, out of the wars and tumults of the world, so this beast, vers. 11. groweth up out of the earth, like plants, silently and without noise; and the greatest prelates have often been raised from monks, and men of the lowest birth and parentage. He had two horns like a lamb; he had, both regular and secular, the appearance of a lamb; he derived his power from the lamb, and pretended to be, like him, all meekness and mildness. But he spake as a dragon; he had a voice of terror, like the dragon or Roman emperors, in usurping divine titles and honours, in commanding idolatry, and in persecuting and slaying the true worshippers of God, and faithful servants of Jesus Christ.

He is an ecclesiastical person, but intermixeth himself much in civil affairs. He is the prime mover, minister, and adviser of the first beast, or the beast before mentioned, vers. 12.; he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him. He holdeth *imperium in imperio*, an empire within an empire; claimeth a temporal authority, as well as a spiritual; hath not only the principal direction of the temporal powers, but often engageth them in his service, and enforceth his canons and decrees with the sword of the civil magistrate. As the first beast concurs to maintain his authority, so he, in his turn, confirms and maintains the sovereignty and dominion of the first beast over his subjects; and causeth the earth, and them who dwell therein, to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. He supports tyranny, as he is by tyranny supported; he enslaves the consciences, as the first beast subjugates the bodies of men. As Mr Whiston well observes, "He is the common centre and cement,

ment, which unites all the distinct kingdoms of the Roman empire ; and, by joining with them, procures them a blind obedience from their subjects, and so he is the occasion of the preservation of the old Roman empire, in some kind of unity, and name, and strength ; which otherwise had been quite dissolved, by the inundations and wars, succeeding the settlement of the barbarous nations in that empire."

Such is the power and authority of the beast, and now we shall see what courses he pursues, to confirm and establish it. He pretends, like other false prophets, vers. 13. to shew great signs and wonders, and even to call for fire from heaven as Elias did : his impostures too are so successful, that, vers. 14. he deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by the means of those miracles which he hath power to do. In this respect he perfectly resembles St Paul's man of sin, 2 Thess. ii. 9. " Whose coming is after the " the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, " and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness " of unrighteousness ;" or, rather, they are one and the same character, represented in different lights, and under different names. It is further observable, that he is said to perform his miracles in the sight of men, in order to deceive them, and in the sight of the beast, in order to serve him : but not in the sight of God, to serve his cause, or promote his religion. Now miracles, visions, and revelations, are the mighty boast of the church of Rome ; the contrivances of an artful cunning clergy, to impose upon an ignorant credulous laity. Even fire is pretended to come down from heaven, as in the case of St Anthony's fire, and other instances, cited by Brightman, and other writers on the Revelation : and in solemn excommunications, which are called the thunders of the church ; and are performed with the ceremo-

ny of casting down burning torches from on high, as symbols and emblems of fire from heaven.

Miracles are thought so necessary and essential, that they are reckoned among the notes of the catholic church; and they are alledged principally in support of purgatory, prayers for the dead, the worship of saints, images, and relics, and the like (as they are called) catholic doctrines. But if these miracles were all real, we learn from hence what opinion we ought to frame of them; and what then shall we say, if they are all fictitious and counterfeit? They are indeed so far from being any proof of the true church, that they are rather a proof of a false one; they are, as we see, the distinguishing mark of Antichrist.

The influence of the two-horned beast, or corrupted clergy, is further seen, in persuading and inducing mankind (vers. 14) to make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live; that is, an image and representative of the Roman empire, which was wounded by the sword of the barbarous nations, and revived in the revival of a new emperor of the west. He had also power (vers. 15.) to give life and activity unto the image of the beast. It should not be a dumb and lifeless idol, but speak and deliver oracles, as the statues of the Heathen gods were feigned to do; and should cause to be killed as many as would not worship and obey it. Some, by this image of the beast, understand the rise of the new empire of Charlemain, which was an image of the old Roman empire, and is now become the empire of Germany: but this is the beast himself, who had the wound by a sword and did live, and not the image of the beast; the rise of this new empire was the healing of his deadly wound, by which he lived again. Others,
more

more probably, conceive, that this image of the beast is the office of Inquisition, which was introduced among the blind vulgar, as a popular scheme, and warmly recommended by the Dominican and Franciscan monks; at first, without any voice of command, or power of execution; till courts were erected independent of bishops, and judges, officers, familiars, prisons, and tormentors appointed, who should put to exquisite punishments, and deliver over to a cruel death, all that would not submit with an implicate obedience. But the office of the inquisition is established only in some particular Popish countries, but this belongs and extends to all in general. As many as would not worship the image of the beast, it should cause to be killed; but there are many Papists who do not receive and own the authority of the inquisition, and yet it doth not attempt to destroy and extirpate all such Papists. What appears most probable is, that this image and representative of the beast is the Pope: he is properly the idol of the church; he represents in himself the whole power of the beast, and is the head of all authority, temporal as well as spiritual. He is nothing more than a private person, without power and without authority, till the two-horned beast, or the corrupted clergy, by choosing him Pope, give life unto him, and enable him to speak and utter his decrees, and to persecute even to death, as many as refuse to submit to him, and to worship him. As soon as he is chosen Pope, he is clothed with the pontifical robes, and crowned, and placed upon the altar, and the cardinals come and kiss his feet, which ceremony is called adoration. They first elect, and then they worship him; as in the medals of Martin V. where two are represented crowning the pope, and two kneeling before him, with this inscription, *Quem creant adorant*, whom

they create they adore. He is the principle of unity to the ten kingdoms of the beast, and causeth, as he is able, all who will not acknowledge his supremacy to be put to death. In short he is the most perfect likeness and resemblance of the ancient Roman emperors, is as great a tyrant in the Christian world as they were in the Heathen world, presides in the same city, usurps the same powers, affects the same titles, and requires the same universal homage and adoration. So that the prophecy descends more and more into particulars, from the Roman state, or ten kingdoms, in general, to the Roman church or clergy in particular; and still more particularly, to the person of the pope, the head of the state as well as of the church, the king of kings as well as bishop of bishops.

Other offices the false prophet performs to the beast, in subjecting all sorts of people to his obedience, by imposing certain terms of communion, and excommunicating all who dare, in the least article, to dissent from them, (vers. 16.) He causeth all, both great and small, rich and poor, free and bond, of whatever rank and condition they be, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and he will not permit any man to buy or sell, or partake of the common intercourses of life, who hath not the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. We must understand, that it was customary among the ancients, for servants to receive the mark of their master, and soldiers of their general: and those who were devoted to any particular deity, of the particular deity to whom they were devoted. These marks were usually impressed on their right hand, or on their foreheads; and consisted of some hieroglyphic character, or of the name expressed in vulgar letters, or of the name disguised in numerical letters,

letters, according to the fancy of the imposer. It is in allusion to this ancient custom and practice, that the symbol and profession of faith, in the church of Rome, as subserving to superstition, idolatry, and tyranny, is called the mark, or character of the beast; which character is said to be received in their foreheads, when they make open and public declaration of their faith, and in their right hand, when they live and act in conformity to it. If any dissent from the stated and authorized forms, they are condemned and excommunicated as heretics, and in consequence of that, they are no longer allowed to buy or sell; they are interdicted from trade and commerce, and all the benefits of civil society. Sir Roger Hovenden, relates of William the conqueror, that he was so dutiful to the pope, that he would not permit any one in his power, to buy or sell any thing, whom he found disobedient to the apostolic see. So the canon of the council of Lateran, under pope Alexander III. made against the Waldenses and Albigenes, enjoins, upon pain of anathema, that no man presume to entertain or cherish them in his house or land, or exercise traffic with them, The synod of Tours in France, under the same pope, orders under the like intermination, that no man should presume to receive or assist them; no, not so much as to hold any communion with them, in selling or buying; that being deprived of the comfort of humanity, they may be compelled to repent of the error of their way. Pope Martin V. in his bull, set out after the council of Constance, commands, in like manner, that they permit not the heretics to have houses in their districts, or enter into contracts, or carry on commerce, or enjoy the comforts of humanity with Christians: in this respect, as the learned Meze observes, the false prophet spake as the dragon. For the dragon, Dioclesian, published a like edict,
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that no one should sell or administer any thing to the Christians, unless they had first burnt incense to the gods; as Bede also rehearseth in the hymn of Justin Martyr: they had not the power of buying or selling any thing; nor were they allowed the liberty of drawing water itself, before they had offered incense to the detestable idols. Popish excommunications are, therefore, like heathen persecutions: and how large a share the corrupted clergy, and especially the monks of former, and the Jesuits of latter times, have had in framing, and in forcing such cruel interdicts, and in reducing all orders and degrees to so servile a state of subjection, no man of the least reading can want to be informed.

Mention having been made of the number of the beast, or the number of his name, (for they are both the same), the prophet proceeds to inform us, what that number is, leaving us from the number, to collect the name, *vers.* 18. Here is wisdom: Let him that hath understanding, count the number of the beast. It is not, therefore, a vain and ridiculous attempt, to search into this mystery, but on the contrary, is recommended to us upon the authority of an apostle: for it is the number of a man; it is a method of numbering practised among men, as the measure of a man (*chap.* 21 *17.*) is such a measure, as men commonly make use of in measuring. It was a method practised among the ancients, to denote names by numbers; as the name of Thouth, or the Egyptian Mercury, was signified by the number 1218; the name of Jupiter, as Harche, or the beginning of things, by the number 717; and the name of the sun, as Nus good, or Lues the author of rain, by the number 668. St Barnabas, the companion of St Paul, in his first epistle, discovers in like manner, the name of Jesus crucified, in the number 318: and other instances might be produced, if there was occasion.

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It hath been the usual method, in all God's dispensations, for the Holy Spirit to accommodate his expressions to the customs, fashions, and manners, of the several ages. Since then, this art and mystery of numbers was so much used among the ancients, it is less wonderful, that the beast also should have his number; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six. Here only the number is specified; and from the number we must, as well as we can, collect the name. Several names possibly might be cited, which contain this number: but it is evident, that it must be some Greek or Hebrew name; and with the name also the other qualities, and properties of the beast, must all agree. The name alone will not constitute an agreement; all other particulars must be perfectly applicable, and the name also must comprehend the precise number 666. No name appears more proper and suitable, than that famous one mentioned by Ireneus, who lived not long after St John's time, and was the disciple of Polycarp, the disciple of John. He saith, "that the name *Lateinos* contains the number of 666; and it is very likely, because the last kingdom is so called, for they are Latins who now reign; but in this, says he, we will not glory:" that is, as it becomes a modest and pious man, in a point of such difficulty, he will not be too confident of his explication. *Lateinos* with *ei*, is the true orthography, as the Greeks wrote the long *i* of the Latins, and as the Latins themselves wrote in former times. No objection therefore, can be drawn from the spelling of the name, and the thing agrees to admiration. For, after the division of the empire, the Greeks, and the other orientals, called the people of the western church, or church of Rome, Latins: and, as Dr Henry Moore expresseth it, "they Latinize in every thing; mass, prayers, hymns, litanies, canons.

nons, decretals, bulls, are conceived in Latin: The papal councils speak Latin; nor is the Scriptures read in any other language under Popery, than Latin: wherefore the council of Trent commanded the vulgar Latin to be the only authentic version. Nor do their doctors doubt to prefer it to the Hebrew and Greek text itself, which was written by the prophets and apostles. In short, all things are Latin; the pope having communicated his language to the people under his dominion, as the mark and character of his empire. They themselves, indeed, chose rather to be called Romans, and more absurdly still, Roman catholics: and, probably the apostle, as he hath made use of some Hebrew names in this book, as *Abaddon*, (chap. ix. 11.) and *Armageddon*, (chap. xvi. 16.) so might, in this place likewise, allude to the name in the Hebrew language. Now *Remiith* is the Hebrew name for the Roman beast or Roman kingdom: and this word, as well as the former word *Latemes*, contains the just, and exact number of 666. It is really surprising that there should be such a fatal coincidence in both names, in both languages. Mr Pyle asserts, and I believe he may assert very truly, that no other word, in any language whatever, can be found to express both the same number, and the same thing."

See the letters in both languages, and numbers below.

Greek.		Hebrew.	
A	. . . 30	7	. . . 200
A	. . . 1	7	. . . 6
T	. . . 300	D	. . . 40
E	. . . 5	'	. . . 10
I	. . . 10	'	. . . 10
N	. . . 50	7	. . . 100
Θ	. . . 70		
Σ	. . . 200		
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	666.		666.

We shall conclude this chapter with some observations, and assertions of popish writers themselves. First, Shewing, that what Rome lost by the emperors becoming Christians, is recovered by the popes. 2. This recovery began immediately after Constantine came to the empire. That Rome recovered and preserved dominion and grandeur only by means of the popes, we have the authority of Steuchus *de donatione Constantini*, "If God had not restored the pontificate or Popery, says he, Rome would have become a vile stable of cows and swine: but in the pontificate, though not that greatness of the ancient empire, yet surely the appearance of it, not much unlike, was restored; whereby all nations, from the east to the west, do adore the Roman pontiff, or pope; no otherwise than of old all nations revered the emperors." And a little after he says, "Are not all things, which at Rome of old were profane or common, made holy; as all the temples of the Gods were made churches of the saints. Also, their profane rites began to be holy rites. Was not the Pantheon, that temple of idols, made the temple of the blessed virgin, or the mother of the saints? Was not the temple of Apollo in the Vatican, where the bodies of the apostles were buried, turned into the church of the apostles themselves?" These are the very words of Popish writers in defence of Constantine's donation. In this sense, it may well be called, the image of the head that went before. See also Bellarmine, lib. 3. *de pont.* "O Rome, says he, by the holy see of Peter, thou being made the head of the world, commandest further divine religion than earthly domination; for, though being augmented by many victories, thou hast extended the power of the empire both by sea and land; yet that which the labour of war hath subdued to thee, is less than that which Christian peace hath brought

brought in subjection." See also Prosper *de ingratia*, cap. 2. "Rome, the see of Peter, which is made to the world, the head of pastoral honour; whatever it doth not possess by arms, it holdeth by religion." Another from Forbes, "Rome, through the dominion of priesthood, or Papacy, made larger by the castle of religion than by the throne of power."

From which passages it is evident, that Rome, before Popery came to its height, was very far inferior (as wounded) to what it was formerly; and also, what pomp Rome has long enjoyed, and what dominion it hath, is derived from the pope's supremacy. See Socrates, *lib. vii. cap. 2.* when speaking of the violence of Calentius, who was a bishop of Rome, he says, "That in exercising his power, he had gone, beyond the bounds of his priestly office, into the secular dominion." And if it is true, what Papists commonly say concerning the donation of Constantine, that he gave Rome and the parts about it to be possessed by the popes, or bishops of Rome, as the patrimony of Peter; and therefore he left Rome upon that account. "We, says he, judged it 'fit to translate our empire, and the power of it, into the east, &c.; because where the chief priesthood, and the head of the Christian religion, is appointed to be by the king of heaven, it is not right an earthly emperor should have honour there." Which donation is more largely expressed by Balsamon, page 88, and is generally owned by them, with all the contents thereof.

It is agreeable to this, what Baronius asserts, in the year 312, of Constantine's giving the imperial palace to Melhiades, the bishop of Rome; and what is afterwards recorded by him, as conferred upon them by the same emperor, as a piece of dignity, in the year 324, he says again, "That Constantine would not suffer the prime priests of
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Christians, to be exceeded in glory by the Heathen priests, who were always enemies to Christianity." And these priests are thus recounted by him, "These are the privileges the priests of the temple did enjoy, as being delivered to them by their forefathers: among them was eminent, the king of their holy things; who, in their banquets, used to watch over them all; and the chief priest was umpire of divine and human things, as you have briefly related out of Lestus: and, how great power was in their soothsayers, who could render even their common councils of none effect, and abdicate the consuls from their office; these things which we have related out of Cicero declare. It was forbidden them, says Plutarch, to have a horse; but they were accustomed to use a chariot for their greater dignity. It was the custom of the priests to enter the capitol in a chariot, as Tacitus affirms: So you will see the Roman priests, as Ammianus relates, were carried through the town in coaches: they go, saith he, sitting in coaches, being clothed very circumspectly; and, that also seemed to be a great dignity, that they never took off their cap or bonnet, which was the ensign of the priests, when all others used to uncover their heads to those they met. The pope, or Roman priest, observes the same to this day. The same author also informs us, concerning this immunity of Jupiter's priest, that he durst not give an oath; because it was not fit, that he should not be trusted in smaller things, to whom the holy things, and things of greater consequence were trusted, &c. Again the priests of the gods were clothed in purple, and that very precious, viz. twice dyed. Also it was the custom, when the high priest was dedicated, to have his head adorned with a ribband, or lace, and a crown of gold, &c.

In which words we have the derivation of the Roman pontifical pomp; namely, the imita on

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of the Pagan high priest. The same Baronius disputes much concerning their honour, in the year 312; and also gives that for the reason, why the Christian emperors still retained the title of Pontifex Maximus, till the reign of Gratian. "Left, says he, the people should raise an insurrection against them, if they had so soon publicly disowned their ancient religion; which, by that title, was still after some sort preserved, in emperors:" by which the author owns a great simularity in that title, to the old Pagan religion; and therefore seeing Popery, by his confession, hath both the name and thing, in a great measure, from the Pagan idolatrous priests, as a copy cast in imitation of them; there must certainly be a very great resemblance here to the former wounded head: and if that be true, which Bellarmine affirms, *lib. i. de conciliis & ecclesia, cap. 16.* As the reason why the bishop of Rome never personally attended the councils, while they were in the east: 1. "It becomes not him, who was the head, to follow the councils. And, 2. He avoided being present, where the emperor was, lest he should have yielded in place to him." This shews how early the bishops of Rome were aiming at supremacy. Again it is evident, if we consider how many emperors and kings have been trode upon by haughty popes; their kingdoms given to others; their subjects loosed from every tie and obligation to them; and all commerce of buying and selling prohibited with those, who acknowledge not the pope. Of which, see Martian's decree, "It is forbidden to those, who acknowledge not the Roman see, to keep houses, kindle fire, make contracts, to be employed in any business, or merchandise; or to have the comforts of humanity with the faithful one of Christ." And in the Latern council under Innocent III. "If a temporal lord neglect to purge his country of heretical wickedness,

wickedness, let him be under the bond of excommunication, and let the pope declare his subjects or vassals, free from their fidelity, and let his country or land be possessed by others. Hence it was accounted treason to have any communion with Lollards: and, according to these acts, the pope excommunicated Henry VIII. of England, and interdicted all commerce with the English nation; as is declared by Paulus III. in the year 1538, and recorded in the history of the council of Trent.

Their bloody cruelty against the saints is well known, not only by the writings of historiographers, but is insisted on by them as a special evidence of their church, and is made the fifteenth note of it by Bellarmine, *de notis ecclesiae*, lib. iv. cap. 18. which being compared with the former chapter, they contain many victories, of old and of late, against the Albigenes and others, opposers of the pope. Thus he concludes, " Scarcely ever have these, who were called heretics, been superior." Which being considered, as during Antichrist's continuance of 42 months, it may be reckoned the accomplishment of what is mentioned vers. 5. and 7. of this chapter. We may also take into the account, what Bellarmine says, of killing 100,000 at one time; and what the venerable Mede cites, out of Petronius, that the number of the slain in France exceeded 1,000,000, during their religious wars. And many other histories inform us, how much they boasted of the unhappy events that beset the opposers of the pope of Rome. Thuanus, a Popish historian, informs us, that the pope, when he heard of the massacre of Paris from his legate, read the letter in the consistory of cardinals, and solemnly gave thanks to the almighty God, for so great a blessing conferred upon the Roman see, and the Christian world. It was also decreed, that a jubilee

should be published, in order to give thanks to God, for destroying, in France, the enemies of the truth and of the church. The pope also sent cardinal Marfin, to congratulate the king of France for that memorable action. Ursin, travelling through France, highly complimented the cities which had been most active in butchering the Protestants, and blessed them in the name of his holiness. Will any Papist dare, after this, to vindicate such a religion, or such a pope, who, like his father the devil, glories in cruelty and murder; and we may add impious subtlety, cunning and treachery: for that night the massacre was committed, the Protestants were invited to a marriage between the house of Valois and that of Bourbon; then, in the dead of the night, without regard to age or sex, these hell hounds began their bloody carnage, till they made the very channels run down with blood into the river. Who, upon reading this, will have the effrontery to deny that the pope is Antichrist, and that the Popish religion is from the devil? unless they can shew, from our Saviour and his apostles, that murder is no breach of the sixth command, and that all manner of cruelties and tortures are authorized by a holy God.

This will also tend to prove these assertions: that the bishops of Rome assume to themselves as absolute sovereignty over kings and kingdoms, as ever the former emperors did over provinces. 2. That witnesses were raised up against their usurpations: but in God's secret justice, or providence, power was given to these miscreants, for several centuries, to prevail over them. 3. That every thing is fulfilled in them, respecting the character pointed out in this beast.

It is also worthy of observation, that Bellarmine attributeth that greatness of the pope's dominion, to the time preceding the reformation,
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and so falleth within his 42 months reign; for, says he, *lib. iii. cap. 21. de pontif.* "In time of Leo the great, that is, 150 years before Antichrist was brought forth, according to your opinion, the pope of Rome was over more nations than the bounds of the Roman empire extended to." And a little after, he says, "In our times, all things succeeded so prosperously to him, that he lost a great part of Germany, Swedland, Gothland, Norway, all Denmark, a great part of England, Switzerland, Bohemia, &c.: therefore, if prosperity be a mark of Antichrist, not the pope, who is spoiled of so many provinces, but Luther may deservedly be called Antichrist." Which words, by their own confession, shew the great change upon their Popish dominions since the beginning of the reformation, and a remarkable decay thereof since the expiring of the 42 months before mentioned.

As Antichrist has been gradually declining since the reformation began, who knows, but the time is not far distant, when he shall at least be driven from Rome, if not cast into the pit. It is more than probable, the present war with the house of Bourbon, will bring on a general war in Europe; as it has seldom failed hitherto, when Britain engaged in war with any other power, that the rest were drawn into the quarrel. Sure, however unlikely it is at present, they will never tamely sit, and see the British empire parcelled out among the French and Spaniards, who are already powerful enough. Besides, it does not appear from this sacred book, that Popery shall again extend itself, or gain what it lost; therefore it is possible, nay even probable, that this war, begun by bad auspices with respect to Britain, may at least tend to the further diminution of Popery, and enlargement of the Protestant religion. As many writers upon this book have

flattered themselves, that the events foretold here would have been accomplished long ago, we will not presume to be dogmatic in our opinion, with respect to what is future; yet we think it is the duty of every lover of truth, to pray and long for the increase of Christ's kingdom, and the final extirpation of Popery.

C H A P. XIV.

The design of this chapter is first to shew, that, during the reign of Antichrist, mentioned in the former chapter, Christ had a church, a number of virgins; that is, pure and unpotted souls, who sincerely and zealously worshipped him. Secondly, That the light of the gospel, which had been so long suppressed, should at length break forth with meridian splendor; in the faithful preaching of it, to the downfall of Babylon, and the comfort of God's peculiar people. Thirdly, It informs us of the happy condition of such as die in the Lord, and concludes with an account of the dreadful punishments which God would inflict on his enemies.

After the former melancholy account of the rise and reign of the beast, the prophetic Spirit delineates, by way of opposition, the state of the true church during the same period; its struggles and contests with the beast, and the judgments of God upon its enemies. Our Saviour is seen, (vers. 1.) as the true Lamb of God, not only with horns like a lamb, standing on mount Zion, the place of God's true worship; and with an hundred forty and four thousand, the same select number that was mentioned before, (chap. vii. 4.) the genuine offspring of the twelve apostles, apostolically multiplied; and therefore the number of the church, as 666, is the number of the Beast: and as the followers of the beast, have the name of the beast, so these have the name of

of God, and, as some copies add, of Christ, written in their foreheads; being his professed servants, and the same as witnesses, only represented under different figures. The angels and heavenly choir, (vers. 2. 3.) with loud voices and instruments of music, sing the same new song, or Christian song, that they sung before, chap. v.: and no man could learn the song but the hundred forty and four thousand; they alone are the worshippers of the one true God, through the one true Mediator Jesus Christ; all the rest of mankind offer up their devotion to other objects, and through other mediators. These are they who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins, vers. 4. They are pure from all the stains and pollutions of spiritual whoredom, or idolatry, with which the other parts of the world are miserably debauched and corrupted. "These" are they who follow the Lamb whithersoever "he goeth;" they adhere constantly to the religion of Christ, in all conditions, and in all places, whether in adversity or prosperity, whether in conventicles and deserts, or in churches or cities. These were redeemed from among men, rescued from the corruptions of the world, and are consecrated as the first fruits unto God and the Lamb; an earnest and assurance of a more plentiful harvest, in succeeding times. "And in" their mouth was found no guile," (vers. 5.) they handle not the word of God deceitfully; they preach the sincere doctrine of Christ, they are as free from hypocrisy as from idolatry; for they are without fault before the throne of God; they resemble their blessed Redeemer, who, (1 Pet. ii. 22.) did no sin, neither was guile found in their mouth; and are, as the apostle requires Christians to be, (Philip. ii. 15.) blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.

neration. But perhaps it may be asked, Where did ever such a church exist, especially before the reformation? And it may be replied, that it hath not existed in idea: history demonstrates, as it hath been before evinced, that there have been, in every age, some true worshippers of God, and faithful servants of Jesus Christ: and as Elijah did not know the seven thousand men who had never bowed the knee to Baal, so there may have been more true Christians than were always visible.

Verf. vi. 7. " And I saw another angel," &c. Such is the nature and character of the true Christian church, in opposition to the wicked Antichristian kingdom; and three principle efforts have been made towards a reformation, at three different times, represented by three angels, appearing one after another. Another angel, (vers. 6.) besides those who were employed in singing, (vers. 3.) is seen flying in the midst of heaven, and having the everlasting gospel to preach unto every nation and people; so that during this period, the gospel should still be preached, which is stiled the everlasting gospel, being, like its divine author, (Heb. xiii. 8.) the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever, in opposition to the novel doctrines of the beast, and of the false prophet; which, (Matth. xv. 13.) shall be rooted up as plants, not of our heavenly Father's planting. This angel is further represented, (vers. 7.) saying, with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come. Prophecy mentions things as come, which will certainly come; and so our Saviour said, (John xii. 31.) now is the judgment of this world; it is denounced with certainty now, and, in due time, will be fully executed. But what this angel more particularly recommends, is the worship of the great Creator of the
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the universe ; Worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. It is a solemn and emphatic exhortation, to forsake the reigning idolatry and superstition ; and such exhortations were made, even in the first and earliest times of the beast : besides, several of the Greek emperors, who strenuously opposed the worship of images. Charlemain himself held a council at Frankfort, in the year 794, consisting of about 300 French, German, Italian, and British bishops ; who condemned all sort of adoration, or worship of images, and rejected the second council of Nice, which had authorised and established it. At the same time, the Caroline books, as they are called, (four books written by Charles himself, or by his authority), proving the worship of images to be contrary to Scripture, and to the doctrine and practice of antiquity, were approved by the council, and transmitted to the pope. Lewis the pious, the son and successor of Charles, held a council at Paris, in the year 824, which ratified the acts of the council of Frankfort, and the Caroline books ; and affirmed, that, according to the Scripture and the fathers, adoration was due to God alone : several private persons also taught and asserted the same scriptural doctrine. Claude, bishop of Turin, declares, “ That we are not commanded to go to the creature, that we may be made happy, but to the Creator himself ; and therefore we should not worship dead men ; they are to be imitated, not to be adored : let us, together with the angels, worship one God.” Agobard, archbishop of Lyons, wrote a whole book against images ; and says, “ That angels or saints may be honoured and loved, but not be served and worshipped : let us not put our trust in man, but in God, lest that prophetic denunciation should redound on us, “ Cursed is the man that
“ trusteth

" trusteth in man : " many other bishops and writers in Britain, Spain, Italy, Germany, and France, professed the same sentiments : and this public opposition of emperors and bishops, to the worship of saints and images, in the eight and ninth centuries, appears to be meant, particularly, by the loud voice of the first angel flying aloft, and calling upon the world to worship God. In another respect too, these emperors and bishops resemble this angel, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto every nation ; for in their time, and greatly by their means, the Christian religion was propagated and established, among the Saxons, Danes, Swedes, and many other northern nations.

Verf. 8. " And there followed another angel," &c. As the admonitions of the first angel had not the proper effect upon the kingdom of the beast, the second angel is commissioned to proclaim the fall of the capital city. " Babylon is fallen, is fallen," &c. By Babylon, was meant Rome, as all authors, of all ages and countries, agree : but it was not prudent, to denounce the destruction of Rome, in open and direct terms ; it was, for many wise reasons, done covertly, under the name of Babylon ; which was the great idolatress of the earth, and enemy of the people of God in former, as Rome hath been in later times. By the same figure of speech, that the first angel cried, that the hour of his judgment is come, this second angel proclaims, that Babylon is fallen ; the sentence is as certain, as if it was already executed. For greater certainty too, it is repeated twice, " Babylon is fallen, is fallen ; as Joseph said, (Gen. xli. 32.) that " the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice, because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass " The reason then is added of this sentence against Babylon ; " because she made all nations

“ nations drink of the wine of the wrath,” of rather of the inflaming wine, “ of her fornication.” Her’s was a kind of Circean cup, with poisoned liquor, to intoxicate and inflame mankind to spiritual fornication. St John, in these figures, copies the ancient prophets. In the same manner, and in the same words, did Isaiah foretell the fate of ancient Babylon, (chap. xxi. 9.) “ Babylon is fallen, is fallen.” And Jerem. li. 7. “ Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord’s hand, that hath made all the earth drunken; the nations have drunk of her wine, therefore the nations are mad.” As by the first angel calling upon men to worship God, we understand the opposers of the worship of images in the eight and ninth centuries; so by this second angel proclaiming the fall of mystical Babylon, or Rome, we understand, particularly Peter Valdo, and those who concurred with him, the Waldenses and Albigenses, who were the first heralds, as we may say, of this proclamation; as they, first of all, in the twelfth century, pronounced the church of Rome to be the apocalyptic Babylon, “ the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth;” and for this cause, not only departed from her communion themselves, but engaged great numbers also, to follow their example, and laid the first foundation of the reformation. Rome then began to fall; and as the ruin of Babylon was completed by degrees, so likewise will that of Rome; and these holy confessors, and martyrs, first paved the way to it.

But not only the capital city, not only the principal agents of idolatry, shall be destroyed; the commission of the third angel reacheth further, and extends to all the subjects of the beast, whom he consigns over to everlasting punishment, vers. 9. 10. 11. “ And the third angel followed them, saying, with a loud voice, If any man worship
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" the beast and his image, and receive his mark
 " in his forehead or in his hand," if any man
 embrace and profess the religion of the beast, or,
 what is the same, the religion of the pope, " the
 " same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of
 " God," or rather, of the poisonous wine of
 God. His punishment shall correspond with his
 crime : as he drank of the poisonous wine of Ba-
 bylon, so he shall be made to drink of the poison-
 ous wine of God ; which is poured out without
 mixture, or rather, which is mixt unmixt, the
 poisonous ingredients being stronger when mixed
 with mere, or unmixt, wine, in the cup of his
 indignation ; and he shall be tormented day and
 night, for ever and ever. By this third angel
 following the others with a loud voice, we un-
 derstand, principally, Martin Luther, and his fel-
 low reformers ; who, with a loud voice, protested
 against the corruptions of the church of Rome,
 and declared them to be destructive of salvation,
 to all who still obstinately continue in the prac-
 tice and profession of them. This would be a
 time of great trial, vers. 12. " Here is the pa-
 " tience of the saints ; here are they who keep
 " the commandments of God, and the faith of
 " Jesus." And it is very well known, that this
 was a time of very great trial and persecution ;
 the reformation was not introduced and establish-
 ed without bloodshed ; there were many martyrs
 in every country. But they are comforted with
 a solemn declaration from heaven, vers. 13.
 " And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto
 " me, Write, Blessed are the dead who die in
 " the Lord, from henceforth ;" if they die in
 the faith and obedience of Christ, and more espe-
 cially, if they die martyrs for his sake : yea, saith
 the Spirit, " that they may rest from their la-
 " bours ;" for immediately upon their deaths
 they enter into rest, " and their works do follow
 " them,

" them ;" they enjoy now some recompence, and
 in due time, in the day of judgment, they shall
 receive the full reward of their good works. It
 is most probable John alluded to a passage in
 Isaiah, where the Spirit hath made the like de-
 claration, chap. lvii. 1. 2. " The righteous pe-
 " risheth, and no man layeth it to heart ; and
 " the merciful men are taken away, none consi-
 " dering that the righteous are taken away from
 " the evil to come : he shall enter into peace ;
 " they shall rest in their beds, each one walking
 " in his uprightness." But the greatest difficul-
 ty of all is, to account for the word *from hence-
 forth* ; for, why should the blessedness of those
 who die in the Lord be restrained to this time,
 and commence from this period rather than from
 any other, when they are at all times, and in all
 periods, equally blessed, and not more since this
 time than before ? Commentators are here much
 at a loss, and offer little or nothing that is satis-
 factory ; but the difficulty in a great measure
 ceases, if we apply this prophecy, as I think it
 should be applied, to the reformation. From
 that time, though the blessedness of the dead who
 die in the Lord hath not been enlarged, yet it
 hath been much better understood, more clearly
 written and promulgated, than it was before ;
 and the contrary doctrine of purgatory hath been
 exploded, and banished from the belief of all
 reasonable men. This truth, moreover, was one
 of the leading principles of the reformation.
 What first provoked Luther's spirit was the scan-
 dalous sale of indulgences ; and the doctrine of
 indulgences having a close connection with the
 doctrine of purgatory, the refutation of the one
 naturally led to the refutation of the other : and
 his first work of reformation was his 95 theses,
 or positions, against indulgences, purgatory, and
 the dependent doctrines. So that he may be
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said, literally, to have fulfilled the command from heaven, of writing, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, from henceforth : and, from that time to this, this truth hath been so clearly asserted, and so solidly established, that it is likely to prevail for ever.

Vers. 14 — 20. But still the voices of these three warning angels not having their due influence and effect, the judgments of God will overtake the followers and adherents of the beast ; which judgments are represented under the figures of harvest and vintage, (vers. 14 — 20.) ; figures not unusual in the prophets, and copied particularly from the prophet Joel, who denounceth God's judgments against the enemies of his people, in the like terms, chap. iii. 13. " Put ye " in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe ; come, " get ye down for the press is full, the fats overflow, for their wickedness is great." What particular events are signified by this harvest and vintage, it appears impossible for any man to determine ; time alone can with certainty discover, for these things are yet in futurity. Only it may be observed, that these two signal judgments will as certainly come, as harvest and vintage succeed in their season ; and, in the course of providence, the one will precede the other, as, in the course of nature, the harvest is before the vintage ; and the latter will greatly surpass the former, and be attended with a more terrible destruction of God's enemies. It is said, vers. 20. that the blood came even to the horses bridles ; which is a strong hyperbolical way of speaking, to express vast slaughter and effusion of blood : a way of speaking not unknown to the Jews ; for the Jerusalem Talmud, describing the woeful slaughter which the emperor Adrian made of the Jews, at the destruction of the city of Bitter, saith, " that the horses waded in blood up to the nostrils." Nor
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are similar examples wanting, even in the classic authors; for Silius Italicus, speaking of Annibal's descent into Italy, useth a like expression of the bridles flowing with much blood. The stage where this bloody tragedy is acted is without the city, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs; which, as Mr Mède ingenuously observes, is the measure of *stato della chiesa*, or the state of the Roman church, or St Peter's patrimony; which, reaching from the walls of Rome unto the river Po, contains the space of two hundred Italian miles, which make exactly 1600 furlongs." See Bishop Newton.

C H A P. XV.

This chapter comes in by way of a preface to what follows; and as God's judgments upon Antichrist have been formerly only spoke of in general terms, we have here, and in the following chapters, a more particular account of them, under the types, or emblems, of seven vials; which, as has already been observed, were to be poured out upon the beast, or Roman hierarchy, one after another, till that religion be wholly eradicated from the earth.

In this chapter, the seven angels are prepared and commissioned by God, as those that sounded the trumpets, in order to fix upon our minds the particular providence and foreknowledge of God, who makes all the events, concerning the church and her enemies, fall out precisely according to the time and manner he hath predetermined and foretold in this book; that his people's faith may be the more confirmed in his promises, and his enemies the more confounded and inexcusable. As we have been hitherto tedious, and perhaps have wearied our reader, with too minute an explication of some of the former chapters, especially, such as belonged to the rise, progress, and

begun fall of Antichrist, we shall therefore proceed to the following.

C H A P. XVI.

Here we have a particular account of the seven vials, or seven last plagues, that are to be poured out upon the worshippers of the beast. As Rome is often, in this prophecy, compared to Egypt, Sodom, and Babylon, for her idolatry, cruelty and other vices: Almighty God is here pleased to parallel her plagues with theirs; and it is observable, that many of the plagues, mentioned in this chapter, very nearly resemble the plagues of Egypt recorded in the book of Exodus; as will appear, by considering the chapter itself.

Verf. 1. "And I heard a great voice out of the temple." Observe, that there is a command given to the seven angels, the executioners of God's justice, to do their office, viz. to pour out the vials of his wrath upon the earth. The command is given by a voice, nay, by a great voice, because it was the command of a great God, about a great work; and said to come out of the temple, in allusion to the holy of holies, the place where God manifested his glory to the Jews, and from whence he gave forth responses to his people. Observe further, how the seven angels receive their commission from God, and pour not out one vial upon the earth till they are ordered to do so; and being called the vials of God's wrath, it gives us this intimation, that what is done against Antichrist is not the effect of man's revenge, (though men may be made the executioners of it), but the effect of God's just displeasure upon an abandoned race; and as vials are vessels of large content, but of narrow mouths, which pour out slowly, but distil effectually, and drench deeply, it imports, that the wrath of God is sure, though slow: it comes upon sinners gradually;

gradually ; but if, upon it's approach, they repent not, it will at last, like a mighty torrent, sweep them away from the face of the earth. The first vial is poured out upon the earth of the beast's kingdom, and God's wrath is perfected against the whore in the following vials. Therefore that song, in chap. xviii and xix. is as the result of these judgments ; for they are judgments inflicted on the beast and his followers, and are not common at all to others. Therefore, in the fourth vial, it is said (ΟΙ ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΙ) the men, having a particular relation to the men mentioned before, viz. these marked with the pope's mark, as will appear afterwards. It is not to be understood, that these vials carry on the pope's ruin in a visible manner : for he still fights ; and in order to harden him, like Pharaoh, he may have frequently seeming advantages, as if he would again recover ; which however, we hope, he never shall : but when God renews his victories over him, he obtains the greater glory, as he did over Pharaoh, by multiplying his judgments against him, according to the allusion.

Further we observe, that the beast's kingdom, when described as the object of these judgments, is spoken of as a world, having a heaven, earth, sun, sea, &c. as parts of it ; as was hinted before, in the destruction of the Heathen, under the sixth seal, chap. vi. and of the Christian world, chap. viii. : which observation is useful to help us to discover what thing in Popery, or in that dominion, is meant ; by some analogy from earth, sea, &c. in the natural body and frame of the world, to such things made use of in that Antichristian world, which, in that respect, are earth, sea, &c. to it. It is also useful to shew what weight religion and its change hath upon people, it makes it appear as another world ; and therefore, the special changes, in all these

three periods, are to be sought for, in the change that is on the outward frame and face of religion. It is likewise useful for illustrating one thing by another; as what was seen in the Christian world, will help to shew what supplieth that place in the Antichristian.

Again, as Antichrist is considered in a double capacity, *viz* civil and ecclesiastical, so these parts of him, rivers, sun, &c. and the effects on them may have a twofold consideration; some of them bring plagues on his temporal, others on his ecclesiastical grandeur and frame, overturning the last by spiritual judgments; therefore some of them, are spiritually, others literally to be understood, and some have respect to both.

It may be still further observed, that in the order of pouring out these vials, there is a very great similarity, both in order and method, as was followed in the trumpets, chap. viii. As the first trumpet, so the first vial is poured on the earth, and so of the rest; but as the worlds are different, so are the effects. This points out to us, that as Antichrist rose by the trumpets, so it is plain he must fall by the vials. The inspired apostle has particularly pointed him out in a suitableness and equality, in God's justice, to bring him down as he rose. Also, in the spreading and counterfeiting nature of his errors, making a whole body, as it were a world in opposition to Christ's world, mentioned before. Likewise by comparing the trumpets and vials together, the effects threatened are distinctly pointed out. Lastly, the beast's ruin is as certain as his rise, and as the last woes in the trumpets were the greatest, so are the three last vials.

Let us also consider the time relating to these vials; and, though it is impossible to determine the distance of time between them, or when each of them begins, yet something may be said, as
certain,

certain, for the rise and close of the prophecy is general; which we conceive to be the same in its rise with the seventh trumpet, sounding (chap. xi) when the Protestant religion began to be established by law, which, as was said, might be about the 1560; that is, after the beasts kingdom is discovered, and a visible decay of his grandeur begun. The pouring out of the seventh vial, as was said, ushers in a glorious spreading of the gospel, God's taking vengeance on all the church's enemies; and closes the scene with the world.

We shall favour our readers with the opinion of Mr Guyse, with respect to the commencement of the vials. The first, he says, began to be poured out between the years 830 and 988; the second, between the years 1040 and 1190; the third, between the year 1200 and 1370; the fourth, between the 1378 and 1530; the fifth, between the 1530 and 1650; the sixth and seventh, he owns, are yet to come. According to this calculation, the trumpets and vials would be cotemporary, which cannot be, as we have already shewn; for the trumpets are sounded to give the church warning of Antichrist's rise, till he arrive at his height. But the vials are poured out upon him and his followers, not as temporal judgments upon nations, but as spiritual plagues upon the popish hierarchy alone. If these vials were poured out as general judgments upon nations, then many of the sealed ones would suffer equally with Papists: the first vial is poured out on those only who had the mark of the beast, and worshipped his image; therefore it cannot be a general judgment, as the loosing of the four angels at the river Euphrates, whose commission was to slay a third part of men without distinction.

Finally we observe, that though there be order in the rise of these judgments, and all the vials are not poured out together, yet, as in the seals
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and trumpets, so also in them, it will not follow, that the former judgment is ended before the next commence; but though there is an order in their beginning, yet the first and second plagues, which are the effects of the first two vials, proceed together to the end, and have the other new plagues added to them. But, to be more particular, there are two things observable in all the vials; first, the object plagued, or that whereon the vial is poured, which is as it were the cause. Secondly, the effect following; viz. the plaguing that object, whether that plague be primary or secondary; for one plague may have sundry effects following upon, or going along with one another. The object denotes some special part of the Antichristian kingdom; the judgment is primary there. Again the effect reflects on the persons, who are the supporters of that kingdom, and affects them, as the earth, sea, sun, seat, &c. is still something of the Antichristian state; which being plagued, plagues the worshippers, as the fall of a house endangers those that are in it.

To conclude, this thing plagued, or on which the vial is poured, cannot be any thing merely active in this judgment; as by sun, in the fourth vial cannot mean the sacred records, because they, as such, are not proper parts of the Antichristian frame; but it must be some other thing accounted scripture by them, something that can suffer by these vials; the suffering whereof, may have such suitable effects upon the subjects of that kingdom, as the rejection of their traditions, &c. may probably grieve, fret, and torment the abettors of them.

Verse 2. "The first angel pours out his vial upon the earth, &c." By earth is commonly understood, something firm and durable, as Psal. civ. "The earth he established, &c." By the earth of the Antichristian world, are understood, such doctrines

doctrines as they esteem the firmest and surest, and upon which all the rest are built; and without which, that building cannot stand, and be a world. Such as the pope's supremacy, whom they reckon absolute, to dispose of all things according to his pleasure; and all others mentioned, chap. xiii. Hence, in chap. viii. earth is taken for the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion; the pouring the vial on this, is a discovery of the absurdity and weakness of such foundations, the rejecting and abhorring them in practice, and men betaking themselves to better and more solid principles, especially when done by publicly authorized preaching.

To this the effects are most suitable; for these plagued, are such who are enslaved to the pope, and stand and fall with him, in the fullest extent of his tenets and doctrines. 2. The plague itself is a boil and sore, but such as is occasioned by the former discovery; alluding to the plagues (Exod ix. 8. 11.) of boils, especially on the magicians. Here is a plague, painful, shameful, and loathsome before others; by which is meant, that inward envy and fretting, that outward contempt and shame, which beset the pope's devoted slaves, when God brought to light the vanity, blasphemy, and hypocrisy of their hellish-devised religion and tyranny, whereby the world had been long deluded. In fine, this imports, that when the seventh trumpet sounds, and God shall begin to plague the pope, by pouring out the vials; he shall, at the beginning, so shake the principal foundations of the Popish religion, as to occasion much inward grief and vexation, (compared to pricking in the reins, Psam lxxiii. 21.) to the chief supporters thereof; and shall make them loathsome and abominable to the world, as the magicians were by the plague of the boils, so that they could not stand before Pharaoh, because they
hardened

hardened his heart, opposed Moses, and endeavoured to prevent the people's delivery from Egypt.

To conclude, it is certain that the foundations of Popery were vigorously attacked; such as the pope's supremacy, indulgences, merits, masses, purgatory, &c.; which made Erasmus merrily say of Luther, "That he had committed two unpardonable faults, in meddling with the pope's crown, and the monk's bellies:" his meaning was, they would never forgive him for gal ing them in such a manner. Also the history and events of the times, sufficiently shew the contempt which followed upon that discovery, the vexation, anxiety, terror, trouble, and grief that seized the Roman clergy

Verse 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. "The second angel poured out his vial upon the sea, &c." The effects are two; 1. It became as the blood of a dead man; and secondly, in consequence of this, every living soul died in it. As the second trumpet advanced, Antichrist's grandeur arose, so this second vial hastens on his ruin; but we imagine the complex body of his kingdom are plagued here, especially their ordinances, government, superstitious forms of worship, councils, decrees, &c. wherein much of their grandeur consisted; now they are attacked, and the Abbacies, indulgences, &c. whereby they subsisted, are in a great measure destroyed.

By sea, must be understood something of this nature; as will be evident by comparing ver. 13. and 17. of chap. xviii: for this sea must be suitable to those who trade in it; and those again, suitable to their occupation, which is, the souls of men; among other things, chap. xviii. and 13. "Those must certainly be their clergy; therefore the sea they trade in, must be their ecclesiastical or church constitutions, forms, and ordinances,

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of sacraments, masses, traditions, &c. chiefly indulgences, pardons, and purgatory; because in these their trade of souls is carried on.

As we have frequently mentioned the Popish sacraments in this essay, a brief account of them may, perhaps, be agreeable to some of our readers: their number is seven; the pope has, by the plenitude of his power, ventured, contrary to the sacred page, to add other five to the sacrament of baptism and the Lord's supper, or Eucharist: these added are, confirmation, extreme unction, matrimony, orders, and penance. "As to confirmation, says Mr Sylvester, what elements are the visible and proper signs of it? by what institution is it ordained? and by what promise of grace, with respect to pardon and eternal glory, is it encouraged and annexed? or, wherein will they fix its common and adequate relation to the two great sacraments? What is their confirmation for receiving of the Holy Ghost; but an audacious, apostish imitation of miraculous operations by the apostle's hands! nor can their equivocal juggles about the promise of the Spirit, relieve them in the case, if the gifts thereof, as sanctifying and comforting, of equal necessity and extent to all times and Christians, be distinguished from its miraculous and extraordinary operations and dispensings; which was to be appropriated to that sealing age, both as to Christians, extraordinary officers, and circumstances.

As to extreme unction, founded upon Mark xvi. 13. and James v. 14. When they can prove these things are to be referred to ordinary and perpetual ceremonies in the church, throughout all ages; and not to the extraordinary circumstances, and ceremonies of a sealing day; wherein it is necessary, that the gospel be sealed, and proved by miracles, at its first introduction into the world; they are more like to win the
day,

day, and prove their unction sacramental. But do not their own Waldensis, Alphonsus é Castro, and famous Estius himself, conclude, that the apostles James and Mark, speak of miraculous cures, were not the parties to be anointed, stricken and held with great diseases, partly contracted and deserved by grievous provocations, and partly inflicted to illustrate that miraculous power which was then on foot? What though there be somewhat of analogy betwixt bodily diseases, and sin itself; yet certainly, oil had been more proper to the *vitium* than the *reatus* of their sins. Analogy is requisite in a sacrament, and the promise (Jam. v.) is of remission; and oil that may have some analogy to wounds, bears little or none to spots or guilt of punishment.

Again with respect to matrimony, who made it a sacrament under the New Testament? Or what is there in the ordinance to make it answerable to the thing? and, if it be a sacrament, yet it is but œconomical; And it is no more divine, than as it is an instituted relative state by God; and so is the covenant between masters and servants: and thus the inauguration of a king, may be reckoned a civil sacrament. But a sacrament of the covenant of grace, is made compatible to all believers: but this is not; for the priest is debarred from this sacrament, lest it impair his purity. But they alledge, it is called a mystery, (Eph. 5. 32.) and have not the woman and beast the same name, (Rev. xvii. 1.) Yea, does not Cajetan affirm, that this place is no argument why matrimony is a sacrament. It is likely he was aware of that which follows closely in the text, *viz.* I speak of Christ, &c. What trifling subtilties do Papists use to amuse the world? as if they designed to be more studious to walk in darkness, than to prevent or heal the wounds of the church.

Next

Next, of orders. Though this may be a sacrament of order, and truly so, yet that is not commensurate with a sacrament of Christianity. All are not ministers, that may be possessed of present grace, and have a title to remission of sins, and everlasting glory. And it seems somewhat strange, that one sacrament of the new covenant should make men incapable of another: as also, that two different sacraments, inconsistent on the one hand, should have the same sign. And it is yet more strange, that this should be equal to baptism and the Eucharist, and yet should want a visible element for its sign.

Lastly, As for penance, (as far as God requires it, and states its use and nature), doth not baptism relate and bind us to it? Is it not baptism of repentance, for the remission of sins? What is the external rite? And where is the accession of the word into the sign, whereby it must be made a sacrament? What is there in penance, commensurate with baptism?

He then proceeds to shew the folly of adding any more, since the two, instituted by our Saviour, are fully sufficient to answer all the purposes of our salvation. These two sacraments, says he, will comprehend all; for they contain what is fully suitable to every state, urge to every virtue, and tend to cure our spiritual diseases: why need we seven of theirs, when Christ hath instituted two sufficient for the purpose. See Mr Sylvester's sermons, printed at Edinburgh 1779.

As in chap. viii. 8. God plaguing these, makes them like the blood of a dead man; that is, it became corrupt; that whosoever would adhere to the Popish doctrines and tenets, would be ruined; such poison was now infused into them, by the council of Trent, which rendered them more deadly than before: besides, the gospel now spreading abroad in many places, and

shining with unfullied lustre, rendered these who continued under Antichrist entirely inexcusable, and their condition desperate; so that now men can no more live in Popery, and own their tenets, than fishes can live among blood; but every person that does not abandon that pernicious religion, must inevitably perish: either because it is now worse than formerly, or because the light of truth, having now blazed forth, has discovered its pernicious nature, a separation is absolutely required. Also by dying here may signify, one's leaving the kingdom of Antichrist; in that sense, they may then be said to be dead to him, when they forsake his principles; or these that continue, become more hardened, and grow spiritually dead.

From verse 4. to 8. the third angel pours out his vial on the rivers and fountains of water, and they become blood. Here is a twofold congratulation or approbation of God's justice, in punishing these men who shed the blood of his servants, *viz.* the saints and prophets; therefore they have blood given them to drink: the meaning is, these bigotted Papists, who have violently persecuted and put to death many thousands of God's people, shall, in their turn, have their blood shed, and that in great abundance; there is a just proportion between their sin and punishment: for as it is said in chap. xiii. 9. 10. "He that killeth with the sword, must be killed by the sword;" of which threatening, this is the accomplishment. Likewise in this, as well as the former, there is an allusion to the plagues of Egypt, when all was blood, and the fishes died.

The object of this vial is fountains and rivers, and such things as furnish moisture and life to the Antichristian world, as fountains and rivers do, to the natural world. They must be something

thing running into the former sea, and in opposition to the truth of the gospel, as chap. viii.; yet so, as cannot be applied to things, but to persons who have shed blood, and whose blood is shed. By this we understand, the different orders of their clergy, the chief instruments and supporters of the whore, or Antichristian world, with their nurseries and seminaries of clergy, whereby they have filled the world with corrupt teachers. The apostle Peter, (2^d epist. chap. ii. 17.) calls them wells without water, clouds carried by the tempest, to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever: these have furnished life to the beast for a long time; men drinking at no other fountain or river, but the erroneous writings of the Roman clergy, whose principles and assertions were accounted preferable to the Holy Scriptures; had not these watered the Popish world, its springs had been dried up long ago. The doctrines of these men shall not only be condemned, but the executors and followers of their principles, whereby many saints have suffered, shall be punished; for they who have been the chief supporters of Antichrist, and malicious persecutors of the saints, must be understood here, as their ordinances were before.

The effect that followed upon this, is, that these rivers became blood: they were not only corrupted and spoiled, as in the former vial, but they became bloody; that is, they had their own blood given them to drink, and were really condemned to such punishments and tortures, as they had inflicted upon the saints; so the following words import, and so the church, in the second seal, is described by a red horse. But lest the Antichristian world should boast of their having suffered as martyrs, the congratulation is added, to shew that it was an effect of justice in them; which congratulation was doubled on that

account. If any should ask why these congratulations are affixed to this vial? we reply, that this work ought to be carefully noticed and regarded by Protestants, as having much of God's glory shining conspicuous in it; therefore we ought to be careful in observing his threatenings and judgments, as well as his mercies. Again, it points out the justice and faithfulness of God, in punishing Antichrist, according to his own predictions in this book. It also upbraids Christian princes and states, for their too great clemency to the whore, and their slowness and backwardness to execute God's righteous designs of punishing her; though they have often prayed and longed for them. We know, that according to the present sentiment which prevails among many, we will be accounted illiberal and narrow minded, and perhaps of a persecuting spirit, which we abhor; but so long as we advance nothing contrary to the sacred text, we despise the censure of men, who account all religions nearly alike.

Here we further remark, the strange insatiation of Protestant powers at present; who are not only looking on as unconcerned spectators, but even seem to take a particular pleasure, in beholding Britain attacked by two Popish powers, who have always been the greatest supports of Popish tyranny; and who, from false principles of politics, are standing aloof, and viewing these enemies of God and man, threatening destruction to one of the greatest supports of the reformation: nay more, we are informed they are forming leagues to hasten on her destruction. This may appear a kind of paradox in politics; but if we consider the behaviour of Britain last war, our wonder will cease; for Britain, favoured by Heaven in every corner of the globe, was victorious over all her enemies; but what was the

the consequence of this? did she ascribe her rapid victories to that invisible Almighty power, who rules heaven and earth by his *fiat*? Surely no; nothing was heard but her invincible wooden walls, and mighty armies: what wonder is it then, if a nation for whom God has done so much, should be left, for a time, to struggle with unsurmountable hardships; and, like Nebuchadnezzar of old, be obliged to acknowledge that there is a God, who rules in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, raising up one and humbling another. Could we now behold Britain properly humbled, and made to see, that her safety depends not on fleets and armies, however powerful, but on God alone, who turns the battle from the gate; then, like a giant roused from sleep or wine, he will make Britain, like worm Jacob threshing the mountains, an instrument in his hand, of pouring out the vials of his wrath upon his and his people's enemies; who have no regard to the most solemn oaths, and the faith of treaties. We are not now to expect miracles as of old, when an angel destroyed a mighty army of Assyrians; yet it is probable, after Britain is justly punished for her pride, and other vices, which are the cause of judgments upon nations, he will then appear for her relief, and make her a sharp-threshing instrument in his hand, to thresh these Popish powers, and to beat them small as dust: as he has often in former ages, accomplished the most glorious schemes; as by a few fishermen, he spread the everlasting gospel throughout the world, in opposition to all the idolatrous civil powers. We will not presume to affirm, for certain, that this will be the case; perhaps he may treat us as he did the Jews of old, by giving us up into the hands of our enemies; but from our observation of past events, and from the apparent tendency of this prophecy

of the vials being poured out gradually, one after another, upon the pope and his adherents, we have all the reason in the world to believe, that they shall never more be able to overturn the Protestant religion. However, God may permit them, as he did the Philistines, to chastise a nation sunk in sensuality, luxury, pride, and effeminacy, and many other enormous vices not fit to be named. Though Britain, like the Jewish nation, has been long, as it were, the darling of providence, and favoured beyond many other nations; yet alas! like that ungrateful people, she seems to have forgotten the hand that made her, and has long preserved her from all the machinations of Popish powers; and a few years ago, he raised her to a pitch of grandeur that quite dazzled her eyes. Did she then acknowledge God in her victories? far from it; all her boast was in her fleets and armies: by my wooden walls, said she, and my brave courageous troops, have I obtained the victory. What wonder is it then, that she should be made to fly before her enemies, and in vain call upon foreign powers to assist her. But who can stand when God is against him? Let her return to her first husband, for then it was better with her than now. Should a general reformation take place, among all ranks of people, from the king on the throne to the meanest of the people; then would we soon behold Britain raising her drooping head, and her warlike sons resuming their native vigour: till then, we despair of seeing her driving her enemies before her, or of obtaining a safe, permanent, and honourable peace. If then Britain has any regard to posterity, to her boasted liberty, and every thing that is dear to her; let her not delay one moment, to set about a work of reformation. Let her imitate the king and people of Nineveh; and instead of balls, plays, masquerades, and

and other idle amusements, which take off the mind from God; let her king, nobles, and commons, put on sackcloth, proclaim a fast, and truly humble themselves before God; and then they may rest assured, he will not be wanting on his part, to grant the desired success. The candid reader, we hope, will pardon this long digression; which, we imagine, is not altogether foreign to the subject.

Although we would not chuse to be particular in fixing the time of this vial; yet considering some remarkable overthrows given to many Papists, in Holland, France, Germany, England, &c. (whereby their own blood was given them to drink), in prosecuting their own wicked designs against Protestants, a little after the council of Trent, to the year 1588; and considering the laws made against seminary priests, saying of mass, &c. that these were punished with death. For this reason, we are of opinion, that this vial is accomplished in part, and that we ought to praise God on that account.

Verse 8. 9. "And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun," &c.

Antichrist's ruin is further carried on, in the same gradual manner as his rise; by this vial, a greater degree of darkness is diffused on his kingdom, and pain, and anxiety upon his followers; the sun of his world is the object of this plague, so that men are scorched with fire; viz. such as have the mark of the beast, mentioned in ver. 2. Then follow three effects of this plague, as in ver. 9. viz. pain, blasphemy, and impenitency.

By sun here is meant, either the pope's temporal or ecclesiastic state. By sun in the natural world, is understood something bright, shining, and conspicuous. Now as the natural sun is the brightest of the heavenly luminaries, so here we conceive some distinguished chief light in the Popish

popish world; such as emperors, kings, or princes, who are esteemed glorious lights: therefore, it is probable, the emperor of Germany, who is called the pope's first born, or the kings of France and Spain, or all of them, may be meant here; as these are the greatest supporters of papal power, and are, as it were, a sun to enlighten her grandeur: or, it may import that God is withdrawing temporal powers from the pope's friendship, as in chap. xvii.; and, seeing they glory in these great props, and bulwarks of their greatness, their loss cannot but be galling to them. As the word of God is the chief defence of Christ's kingdom, so external force, the inquisition, &c. support and uphold Popish tyranny; and these precede the fifth vial, wherein the beast is to be pulled from his seat by some kings.

Again, considering this beast as a whorish church, the sun in her may import the complex doctrine, rules, and canons of the Romish church; or, what they put in the place of the sacred writings, which we observed in chap. viii. under the fourth trumpet, signified the sun; this is profitable to that kingdom, or heaven, where it shines; and that is it which is meant here.

When God made the light of his word to shine in a more convincing and conspicuous manner, and makes the prophecies concerning Popery more evident, by which its glory is stained, and that darkness and ignorance, which Papists wickedly called the mother of devotion, is, in a great measure, abolished; this will burn and scorch them as fire. When the prophesying of only two witnesses so tormented, chap. ix. how will the light of the glorious gospel, darting forth its healing light, darken their sun, as the rise of their errors darkened the gospel-sun, chap. viii. but not in the same manner; for like a fire it will scorch and torment them, as in Isaiah xxvi. 11.

This

This is a further addition to the first plague, and both these applications may agree with this type.

The second effect is, that they blasphemed God, who has power over these plagues: hence we may learn, that though God sends his judgments to call the wicked to repentance, yet they will not repent, even when they are lying under his wrathful hand. We may also observe God's sovereignty, in ordering all his judgments as he in his infinite wisdom sees meet; of what a heinous nature then, must the impenitency of Papists be, since neither mercies nor judgments can reclaim them, but they proceed from evil to worse, even to blaspheme that adorable name which angels revere.

The fourth vial is supposed still to be running on; as there has been no very material difference in the popish world for a long time, except the expulsion of the Jesuits, and breaking their order; also the inquisition, that hellish engine of cruelty, we are informed, is in a great measure, laid aside; likewise persecutions of Protestants are now more seldom than formerly; Papists and Protestants now live together with more cordiality and freedom, and, by the increase of traffic, their animosities are much abated: we have lately seen a treatise upon traffic, written by a French Abbot, wherein he expresseth as high a sense of liberty as any Protestant writer. It is the opinion of many, that the despotic powers now only consider Popery as a state engine, to keep their subjects under absolute subjection and slavery. Even the dull, phlegmatic Spaniards are now encouraging learning, and learned men; as an evidence of this, a Protestant historian, in high repute among the *literati*, has been made a member of the society of arts and sciences at Madrid. Now, as learning seems to make hasty strides in Europe and America, we would fain hope the accomplishment

accomplishment of the fifth vial is near at hand, which is to be poured out on the throne of the beast; as in vers. x. 11. The object of this vial seems to be more distinctly marked out; *viz.* the beast's seat; this plainly shews us, that when the fifth vial is poured out, things will be so visible, that they will not be veiled with types; for it brings along with it a more sensible step of his ruin, as the fifth trumpet did of his rise. This likewise foretells the destruction of Rome, the habitation of wickedness for many centuries, which will make the pope seek some other seat.

The seat or throne, here, is the same, as in chap. xiii. 2. is called the seat or throne of the dragon, *viz.* Rome; for though his dominions extended over many countries, yet there he kept his court, from thence he issued his edicts. And as Rome was the emperor's throne, so has it been the pope's for many centuries, and therefore the object of this plague; because the beast has got the same which the dragon or emperor had, chap. 13. Also, it agrees well with the scope and gradation of these vials, which bring the judgments nearer and nearer to Antichrist, till they make him fly from Rome, as the following vial shews. It is also evident, from the explanatory prophecy of this same vial, in chapters xvii. and xviii. where the destruction of Rome, is mentioned under the name of Babylon. It agrees also well with the order of the trumpets, betwixt which and the vials, there is a great similarity; by the fifth the pope ascends his throne, and by the fifth vial he is driven from it; and supposing the Popish kingdom to be Antichristian, and the pope to be Antichrist, then it must be evident that Rome is the throne; it being from the pretended infallibility and sanctity of that see, that they derive their splendor. The first four vials made some outward approaches to him; but this storms

storms and overturns his strong hold ; as is more fully discovered, chap. xviii.

The effects are four : first, his kingdom is full of darkness ; this does not destroy, but distress him, it fills his kingdom with the darkness of misery and trouble, of calamity and confusion. Though the pope's kingdom was full of darkness before, yet that was a darkness of ignorance and error, this of calamity and horror ; by the loss of that lustre, respect, and reverence, which the pope's throne had before, but is now deprived of. Secondly, as an evidence of this distress, it is here said, that they gnawed their tongues for pain ; that is, they were almost distracted at the decline of their grandeur. Where observe, from the gnawing of their tongues, we may plainly perceive the horror of their consciences ; for as God makes the guilty consciences of the wicked to be their own accusers, so he can make them, whenever he pleaseth, their own tormentors. These worshippers of the beast seduced others by their false doctrine, of which their tongues were the instruments ; and now God makes their tongues, like so many scorpions tails, the instruments of their torments. The third effect is, they blasphemed the God of heaven ; probably now breaking out into open rage, as if he had not made good his supposed promises to the apostolic see, Christ's vicar, and mother church ; therefore, in this fury, they run to any instrument for help, as under the sixth vial ; yet, in the last place, they repented not of their evil deeds which brought this wrath upon them ; they were so wedded to their destructive tenets, that, instead of embracing the truth, which now shines round them with radiant splendor, they cling the faster to their delusive errors and false doctrines, till, under the next vial, they are utterly destroyed.

Verse

Verse 12. " And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the river Euphrates," &c.

The accomplishment of this vial is yet to come, but, we hope, not far distant; however, what is future being only known to God, we acknowledge, with all reverence, our ignorance of what is to come: yet we have two circumstances which may serve to clear up the matter. First, the time for it, must be after the destruction of Rome; for, as the first four vials begin, and carry on the judgment of Antichrist, by discovering his errors, spreading the gospel, by armies and temporal calamities, taking vengeance on his protectors, and withdrawing some of the western kings from him, who had frequently given their power to him, as in chap. xvii.; so the fifth vial is poured out on his seat, by which he is driven from Rome.

By this sixth vial, God still pursues that fugitive beast, who is exerting every nerve to recover strength, by endeavouring to procure new friends; but God raiseth up new enemies against him and all his adherents; after he has permitted them for a time to take part with him, he and they at last are cast into the pit: for though the fifth vial expels him from Rome, yet there still continue to be popes till this sixth vial puts an end to them for ever; as appears from chap. xix.: and then the seventh vial shall usher in the destruction of all the enemies of Christ, especially such as still adhere to Popery; for though there be no pope, yet it would appear, some continue to the end doating after him, and lamenting his destruction.

Secondly, by comparing this place with chap. xix. we have another help to understand this the better; as the xviii. chapter illustrates the fifth vial, so does the xix. illustrate this.

Here a battle and gathering is mentioned, but the event is not ascertained, till the xix. chapter; when

when the party acting contrary to this gathering is expressed: and that it is the same gathering, is evident; for here it is the day of God, there it is the supper of the great King; denoting one particular and remarkable overthrow of God's enemies. Also the enemies destroyed there are the same mentioned here, *viz.* kings and their armies, the beast and false prophet, (who are mentioned under the same names, in both places, to shew the reference of the one to the other); and therefore, comparing chapter xix. with the events here, it appears, that the first four verses contain one very desirable, *viz.* an accession to the church; answerable to which, is the praise in the beginning of that chapter; the other shews a special design of the beast, which God disappoints, as may be seen in chapter xix.

The great river Euphrates, is the object of this plague, and here we have three remarkable events; first, the Jews conversion, in that expression, the preparing the way of the kings of the east. The second is, the overthrow of the Turkish empire, by drying up the river Euphrates. And thirdly, the last expedition of the beast, for the support of his tottering kingdom, in the following words, with its event, chap. xix. This last expedition is occasioned, probably, either on account of the Jews conversion; who now discover the pope to be Antichrist, and therefore they join with his enemies, whereby he is obliged to look out for new friends: or these words may more fully explain what was anticipated before; *viz.* Antichrist, being now driven from Rome by the western kings, who now hate him, he applies to the Turk for assistance; who will grant it the more readily because of the Jews, who are now formidable and inimical to both; and are now, probably, to get possession of their ancient

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dominions,

dominions, which has long been under the power of these infidels.

We have already given a description of the river Euphrates, beyond which the Jews were carried captive; therefore it stands now in the way of their return. This is an impediment to their conversion, and prevents them from assisting at the pope's overthrow; and as the waters of Jordan were formerly dried up for them, that they might enter dry-shod into the holy land, so the Turk, who now possesseth Palestine, and the countries upon the Euphrates, must be removed: for, as in chap. ix. the people, who were said to be bound about that river, were loosed as a scourge upon Papists, so now they must be dried up or conquered. It is possible the Russians, Prussians, or some other of the northern powers, may lend their aid to dry up that river. The Turkish empire has, of late, fallen much into decay, like a man stooping and tottering under a load of years; it will be an easy conquest, when God commands to invade it.

By kings of the east, mentioned here, commentators commonly understand the Jews; who, after their conversion, may well be accounted kings and priests, as well as other Christians. In Is. xxiv. 21. 22. and 23. verses, we find, that Israel is to be chastened, and afterwards, when restored, they are called kings; for no other people are capable of the comfort intended in the promise, as Calvin remarks; for it supposeth them once to have been God's peculiar people, and, for a long time, to have been forgotten by him; what follows likewise confirms it: "That the Lord of
" hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jeru-
" salem, and before his ancients gloriously."

It is also evident, that this visitation has respect to their last calling; for it is after many days, when their land has been long possessed by others.

others. The erecting of Christ's kingdom among them again, in a most glorious reign, has respect to that time when it shall be most illustrious, which will certainly be at their last conversion; though all agree, it may be fulfilled in some measure under the gospel, yet their final conversion will tend more to the glory of God, by the universal spread of the gospel. The apostle Paul emphatically styles it, "Life from the dead" to the world; and why may not God confer upon his own ancient people names importing his singular regard to them, and his own promise concerning them?

They are called kings of the east, because they live east of the places where the gospel is continued; and so they are distinguished from the western kings, who now hate the whore. Again, because many of them living in these eastern countries, ever since the captivity by Sennacherib, and Nebuchadnezzar; from whence they may come, and join the kings of the west against the pope. Lastly, it is more than probable, that after the destruction of the Turk, God may give them a large portion of his extensive empire; and they may be made very instrumental in spreading the gospel, among the kings and emperors of the east; for their conversion will be one of the strongest evidences of the truth of Christianity.

We shall now consider what is meant by preparing their way: this may infer, the removing all obstructions out of it, such as the Turk and Antichrist. The Popish idolatry has been long a stumbling block to the Jews, who have ever had the greatest aversion to idolatry, since the restoration from the Babylonian captivity. The great Turk, the common enemy of Christians; and whose religion is a compound of blasphemous nonsense, is also a great hinderance, and stumbling block in their way; the first is now, in some

measure removed, by the fifth vial driving the pope from Rome; the second is removed by this vial. The pope being now discovered by them as Antichrist, who has long been a mean of hardening them in their unbelief; for which reason, they will doubtless be more zealous to destroy him, than any other of the Protestant powers. Likewise, the Turk being their enemy, and becoming engaged to support the whore, they are prevented while his empire stands. This vial removes that obstruction; his empire is weakened, whether by them, by others, or both, we will not presume to affirm: however, they are permitted to pull Antichrist down; and perhaps, by his ruin, get possession of their own land. This leads us to consider, in the third place, how the destruction of the Turks may be called a preparing of their way; which is either, by their being enabled to believe in the divinity of our glorious Emmanuel, upon which their hopes of coming home are enlarged; or their undertaking against Antichrist, or their return to their own country; all which, as has been observed, are pointed at here. Whilst the Turkish empire stands, all these three are obstructed; but the destroying of it will strengthen all, and permit them, without fear, to profess their faith, in their long-looked for Messiah.

We shall adduce a few reasons, in order to confirm the truth of the above assertions. First, it is certain that the Jews conversion, in the last days, is foretold, is expected; and it cannot suit with any time better than the sixth vial, which is after the pope is driven from Rome and before the seventh vial, which continues to the end of the world. It is not probable, that a matter of such importance to the church would be omitted in this book, and no other place appears to us so suitable. The prophet Isaiah, chap. xi. 15. 16.

speaks

speaks of their return in similar terms; that, as God dried up Jordan when he brought them out of Egypt, so when he shall bring them from Assyria, (which, with respect to Judea, is beyond Euphrates), he shall smite that river; that is, he shall remove all obstructions out of the way. The drying up the Red sea and Jordan appears to have been typical of this, and to confirm the faith of God's people the more in his promises of a full and final restoration; as in Isaiah xlv. 27. "Thus saith the Lord, who drieth up the rivers, and saith to the deep, Be dry," &c. when yet no particular river is there mentioned; but thereby to put them in mind of what God had formerly done for them.

Also, if we consider, in chap. xix. what high expressions of joy, and most lofty terms are used, in praising God; because he reigneth, because his wife hath made herself ready, and the marriage is come, &c. Can these exalted phrases agree so well to any other event, as to the conversion of the Jews? which shall be as life from the dead, Rom. xi. Can the joy be so great, or the marriage be consummated without them? especially seeing, if they are not among Christ's friends, when, in the words following, he is on his march against all his enemies; and could the church of the Gentiles be merry, if the Jews were among these enemies? But, from chap. xix. it is plain, there is a great accession to the church; which must certainly mean the Jews, with the fulness of the Gentile nations.

As a fourth reason, we may observe, that more Hebrew phrases and expressions are used here, than any where else in this book; which seems to plead, a special interest the Hebrews have in the event of this vial. The place is called, in the Hebrew language, Armageddon; why? because the Hebrews are to give it that

name, as their custom was to give names to places from events. Also, the praise is in Hebrew, chap. xix. Alleluiah, used frequently in the Psalms, but not mentioned in any other song in this prophecy, though they are frequent : because there were few Hebrews praisers before now, these introduced are called the Lamb's wife, as in a covenant-relation before she is made ready ; which can agree to none but that ancient married people, unto which covenant God has respect, even in their last calling.

Some may ask, what is meant by the Jews restoration ? whether are they only to be restored to the faith of the gospel ; or, along with it, to the possession of their own land ? Most commentators seem to be of opinion that they will obtain both.

It is certain, that the ten tribes have never yet returned to their own country ; only those returned who were carried away by Nebuchadnezzar : now, if we consider what the prophet Ezekiel says, chap. xxxvii. from verse 18. to the end of the chapter ; where he declares, that all Israel shall return, together with Judah, to their own land, and continue in it to the end of time. See also, Amos ix. 11. to the end, and many other places are to the same purpose.

Likewise, the same reasons plead for their return to their own land, as for their conversion ; they were, anciently, God's covenanted people, and the terms of the covenant were, that they should possess the land of Canaan for ever ; and, into whatever countries they should be scattered, as soon as they repented, they were to be restored into their own country. For this, see Deut. xxx. 2. 3. Can this promise be made null and void by the coming of Christ ? Surely no : for, by the accomplishment of it, God's glory will shine more conspicuously among the Heathen, and it will doubtless contribute much to their conversion.

tion. Therefore it appears, that they may expect their own land, as a part of God's engagement to the natural seed of Abraham.

Some remarkable occurrences of God's providence seem likewise to confirm this. Though they are scattered among all nations, in Europe, Asia, Africa, and perhaps America too, wherever traffic is carried on, yet they remain a distinct people, unmixed with any; and though they are generally rich, yet few or none of them are suffered to buy and possess land: and, as their ancient inheritance is not in the possession of any Christian prince, but such as God designs to destroy, when they have accomplished his purposes, may we not conclude, that it is still designed for them? As the conversion of the Jews, and the destruction of Mahomed, are to happen about the same time, is not that a further proof of our assertion? When the Turk shall be totally overthrown, will any of the Christian powers claim their portion of that great empire? Surely no: especially, as we may suppose, they will then be more concerned for the interest of religion, than for the possession of land.

Whether the Jews shall possess Palestine, or not, we presume not to affirm as certain, any further than the sacred records seem to countenance; but one thing we are sure of, that they shall be converted to the Christian faith, which we hope will be soon. As there was a general expectation of the Messiah, before he made his appearance on earth, so there has been of late, among many, an expectation of the speedy accomplishment of these great events; and whether the present broils, in which some of the powers of Europe are engaged, will usher in any of them, time only can determine.

Verf. 13. "And three unclean spirits, like frogs, came out of the mouth of the dragon."

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In the former verses we had an account of the subject on which the sixth vial was poured ; here we have an effect which followed upon it. *viz.* a warlike expedition, or a gathering together to battle. The principal commanders in this battle are the dragon, (or devil), the beast, and false prophet, (or the pope of Rome), who has both names given him ; next we have the instruments employed by them, who are said to be, for their nature spirits, for their quality unclean, for their number three, for their similitude frogs ; *viz.* with respect to their original, they breed of corruption, and numerous, swarm and croak in all places, and live both on land and in water : by all which, interpreters understand emissaries, missionaries, negociators, solicitors, and legates, sent forth and employed by the pope, for supporting and strengthening both of him and his kingdom, by soliciting the kings of the earth to join together in a battle against the church. Here we may see earth and hell combined together, with all their emissaries and instruments, to rouse princes, and engage them to fight against the almighty JEHOVAH and his church, in order to prevent the spreading of true Christianity, and the conversion of the Jews : but shall they prevail ? most certainly not. For though God may permit the devil to assist these spirits in working miracles, for a time, to deceive the nations devoted to destruction ; yet both here, and elsewhere, he makes it a badge of Antichrist and his followers, that they are spirits of devils working miracles, as in 2 Thess. ii. 9. Likewise, our adorable Redeemer, in verse 15. comforts his church with his speedy coming to their assistance, and when they least expect ; Behold, says he, I come as a thief. At the same time, he exhorts them to be ever watchful, and on their guard against the delusions of that-man-of-sin, by keeping their garments

ments clean ; that they may be ready to fight on his side against his enemies, when called to the great battle of Armageddon. This word is compounded of *g'arim*, signifying subtlety, as applied to the serpent, Gen. iii. 1. from which *rama* is derived ; and *geddon* comes from a root that signifies gathered together ; thus it seems, decently gathered together by craft. Others again apply it to the hill Megiddo, a place in Judea, famous for the defeat of Sisera's mighty army, by a woman's hand ; so these enemies, brought into a proper place, will be as Sisera at Kison. We approve the first opinion, as agreeing best to the Hebrew way ; and that is perhaps the reason why it is expressed in that language, a thing common among the Jews, to give a name suitable to the event.

Verf. 17. 18. &c. “ And the seventh angel “ poured out his vial into the air,” &c. Intimating to us, that God will now not only take vengeance on any of the followers of Antichrist, that remain after the great battle above mentioned, but also upon all the enemies of his church. As the devil is called the prince of the power of the air, so he and his worshippers, or all such who, like him, oppose the truth, shall be utterly cut off, and no place left for them to escape unto : for it is said, “ every island fled away ;” that is, there shall be no place to shelter them from the wrath of him that sitteth upon the throne, and of the Lamb.

We formerly observed, that this seventh vial contains the time from the destruction of the pope and Mahomed to the end of the world ; as we have already seen them both sunk in everlasting oblivion, we would also have put a period to this essay : but seeing the three following chapters, as is said, are a kind of paraphrase upon the former types, therefore, before we conclude,

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we shall take a cursory view of them. And though we are often obliged to trace over the same subject, and often to use the same or similar expressions, in handling the explanatory chapters, yet we shall endeavour, according to our memory and abilities, to vary them, and to make the whole as agreeable to our judicious and learned readers as possible.

C H A P. XVII.

Verf. 1. 2. " And there came one of the seven angels," &c. In these chapters the Holy Spirit, by the pen of John, points out more fully and distinctly what this Babylon, or Antichristian church, and who this Antichrist is. We may then view this prophecy, especially this and the following chapters, as a key for opening up the meaning of the mysterious things contained in the former prophecies. This angel shews John the judgment of the great whore, which cannot be the last judgment under the seventh vial; for what follows, in the xviii. chapter, as the destruction of Babylon, which is the seat of the beast, nor the battle of Armageddon, where the beast is destroyed, which belongs to the sixth vial. We conceive the remarkable events on the beast and his throne are temporal judgments, carried on gradually by the kings, who once gave their power to the beast, but now hate him, as appears from verse 16. ; all which shew, that this prophecy or vision, chap. xvii. xviii. xix. belong to the fifth and sixth vials.

In this chapter, the angel describes the object of these judgments, viz. the great whore and beast, informs us who they are, also the instruments used to complete their ruin. Then chap. xviii. he proceeds, more fully and pathetically, to shew the temporal destruction of the whore, by the following lamentations of her friends; which declares

declares it not to be the last judgment on her; which would have none succeeding it; but only that judgment on the beast's seat, mentioned under the fifth vial, chap. xvi. Then he proceeds, in chap. xix. to describe the events of the sixth vial, in the great and decisive battle of Armageddon, which was defective till supplied there. After there is the last vision, in chap. xx xxi. and xxii. which point out the events of the seventh vial; wherein Rome is not only destroyed, as in the fifth vial, and the beast, as in the sixth, but the dragon, or devil, and his dominions, as in the seventh. So that the xviii. chapter illustrates the fifth vial, the xix. the sixth. the xx. xxi and xxii. the seventh; and this xvii. chapter is an introduction to them all.

There is a great difference between the figurative way, by which the vision or prophecy is expressed, and that by which it is explained. The first prophecy is given us darkly, by types or figures, and to explain them literally would be absurd; but the interpretation is in more clear expressions, and to be understood more literally;

In the vision, though heads and horns are not to be taken in a literal sense, yet in the interpretation, seven heads are seven hills, and ten horns are ten kings, these are literally understood as such; especially, as the angel defines the hills, viz. such as the woman sits on, as also the kings, that five are past, one is, and the other is to come, and the ten kings, who had not as yet received power, but were to get it afterwards, &c.

We may observe, concerning this woman or whore, they are one and the same city, viz. Rome; this name is given her, in allusion to Israel of old, who were in covenant with God, and thereafter said to go a whoring from him, when they fell into idolatry; for it is never applied to the Heathen, because it signifies a contract or marriage

stage with some party. The whore must then mean a city, that was once Christian, but has turned from God by idolatry, and become unfaithful to her husband. As the woman and whore are one, so Babylon, called the great city Sodom, mentioned chap. xi. 8. and the whore, are the same; as is evident from their names, vers. 5. and 18. and their practices are the same, viz. to allure to fornication, chap. xiv. 8. to persecute, chap. xl.; and their ruin and judgment is the same: Compare chap. xiv. vers. 9. and 10. with chap. xvi. vers. 18. when the epithet great is added to city, whore, or Babylon, the same particular party is described, but in divers considerations; either of her dominion, as vers. 18. or pride, whoredoms, and oppressions, or some such thing; for which she gets divers names, and is represented by divers types.

Most of the ancient fathers were of opinion, that by this woman was meant Rome; as Tertullian, in his book against the Jews, says "Babylon in our John, is a figure of the city Rome; being so great, so proud of the empire, and the destroyer of the saints," &c. also Hieronymus to Marcellus, Augustine, and many others: nay, the same is granted by the most learned of the Popish writers; as Baronius in his annals, vol. I. an. 45, says, That Rome, in the Revelation of John, designed by the same name, viz. Babylon is confessed by all. Bellarmine, the greatest champion for Popery, in *lib. de pontif. Rom.* having first given the opinion of Arethas, Hyamo, Bupertus, and Breda, who say, that the city Babylon means the multitude of the wicked; but says he, in my judgment, Rome is more properly understood by it. And *lib. 2. cap. 2.* he expressly says, "John, in the Revelation, every where calleth Rome Babylon; and it is evidently gathered from chap. xvii. where Babylon the great

great is said to sit on seven hills, and to have dominion over the kings of the earth; neither was there any other in John's time, which had power over the kings of the earth, besides Rome: and it is well known to every one, that Rome was built on seven hills." See also, *lib.* 3. Estius and Riberta are of the same opinion; the Rhemists, Alcasar, Cornelius á lapide, Blasus, Viegas, and others, understand it of Heathen Rome.

It is impossible to apply it to any other than Rome; all Popish writers do the same, except a few, who apply it to an Antichrist to come.

The beast here carrying the woman, is the same spoken of in chap. xi. who comes out of the bottomless pit and kills the witnesses. It is the same with that beast mentioned, chap. xiii. They rise all out of the pit: they are described with heads and horns, and are employed in persecuting the saints, and blaspheming God: also, the time they belong to is the same; that beast chap. xiii. riseth, after wounding of the sixth head; this riseth, when that government, which was then, is expired; yet they fall under divers considerations, as the two beasts formerly, chap. xiii. The beast is as the husband, or adulterer; the woman, as the wife or whore; the woman represents an apostate church, or the body; the beast supporting her, denotes the head or power sustaining and acting her; which, in respect of absolute power, tyranny, and persecution, became one.

Again, there is a near alliance between the whore and beast: they belong to one time; for the beast carries her, and they make their appearance together: they have both a scarlet colour, have blasphemies and fornications as their mark; they are both exalted and depressed together: when the kings give their power to the beast, she is exalted; when they take it away,

she is depressed. His throne, which was the dragon's, is her seat, *viz.* the seven hills; from which proximity, it is evident, they must dwell together.

Moreover, this beast is such an empire and dominion, as not only supports the city Rome, but Rome a whore; and not as a temporal head only, keeping men under subjection by force; as the old Roman empire did; but such a head as the world wonders at, as chap. xiii. and vers. 8. of this chapter; and such a head, as ten kings, formed out of the old Roman empire, shall cheerfully yield their power unto: and so long as they pay homage to the beast, the whore is fearless; but when they withdraw it, and cast him off, then she is burnt.

By which it appears, that the woman is the Romish church, described in chap. xii. 1. in opposition to the true church; and by beast, is meant the Roman see, or papal power, by which this whore is supported, and to whom the kings of the earth give their power, and after whom the world hath long wondered; as was proved, chap. xiii. concerning this same beast: and the propositions we laid down in that chapter, may properly be applied in this.

We shall next consider, at what time the things spoken of the beast and whore are applied to Rome. It is in the last state of that empire, before its utter ruin, that the beast makes his appearance; he riseth out of the bottomless pit, and therefore it is not that which was in John's time, any lawful government succeeding the emperors; but such as the dragon gave, chap. xiii.: a sovereignty invented by the devil, and not authorised by the word of God; such as, universal bishop, prince of pastors, and vicar of Christ; it is wholly a civil power, though a persecuting one. It is Rome under the last head of seven, five where-
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of were past in John's time; the sixth, *viz.* the emperors, then existed; the seventh, called also the eight, because it was both kingly and priestly, not then come: and this last head is expressly called the beast, (or pope of Rome), vers. 11.

Therefore Rome, under none of the first six governments, is the beast here meant; but under the seventh and eighth, which in Rome succeeded to the emperors; for this last is to have none after it. Another character is, to try the time by the horns; that government of Rome is the beast, which has, for its support, ten kings reigning, who had not received their kingdom in John's time, vers. 12. Once more, it agrees to that state of Rome, when ten kings shall have withdrawn their subjection from the emperors, shall yet unanimously, and with one consent, give their power unto, and devote themselves to this beast. Also, these kings shall take part with the beast, in making war with the saints, till God discover to them, or at least to some of them, the baseness and wickedness of the whore, vers. 14. compared with the 16. and 17. It must then be applicable to that time, when persecutions abounded throughout the Christian world, by the laws of these kings, when the prophets prophesied in sackcloth, and were slain.

The present papal church of Rome, justly deserves the name of whore, having been guilty of the greatest defection, and apostacy from the true evangelical doctrine and worship of God, that ever was in the world; and she is deservedly called the great whore, because of her whoredoms, committed with so many under her power and jurisdiction, having many people subject to her; and, for that reason, she is said to sit on many waters. The true church is Christ's spouse, betrothed to him in righteousness, loving kindness, and tender mercies; and at any time to apostatize from him

is spiritual whoredom, which shall not pass with impunity. Hence we may observe, how odious idolatry is to God, and how highly it provokes his wrath; even as the whoredom of a woman provokes her husband's jealousy: and never was husband more jealous of his spouse, than God is jealous of his worship. It was idolatry that made him sell his people into captivity, among the Babylonians, Assyrians, &c.

Vers. 2. "With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication," &c. As Tyre, Is. lxiii. 17. is said to have committed fornication with all the kingdoms of the world, so also Rome, has not only decoyed kings to commit fornication (which in Scripture stile is idolatry) with her, but also inferior persons, here denominated the inhabitants of the earth, who have been drunk with the wine of her fornication: as wine intoxicates men, and renders them stupid and senseless, so does idolatry stupify its votaries, and renders them incapable of relishing the pleasures of true religion. If we take this in a literal sense, modern Rome openly allows the one, as well as practises the other; as we have already proved.

Vers. 3. "So he carried me away into the wilderness," &c. in allusion to Ezekiel, when a captive in Chaldea, he was conveyed by the Spirit to Jerusalem. Here the beloved disciple is carried into the wilderness, not, like his divine master, to be tempted of the devil, but that he might be removed from all the hurry and bustle of the world, in order to get a view of all the events that were to befall the church to the end of time. When the woman (the church) was persecuted and afflicted, she was said to flee into the wilderness; and in like manner, when the woman (the false church) is to be destroyed, the vision is presented in the wilderness. A woman sitting upon a beast, is a lively emblem of a church,
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or city ruling an empire. In sculpture and painting, as well as in the language of prophecy, cities are represented in the form of women; and, in ancient coins, Rome is exhibited as a woman sitting upon a lion. This beast is further described, as arrayed in scarlet, for the same reason that the dragon was described by the epithet of red, to denote his cruelty; and in allusion to the distinguishing colour of the Roman emperors and magistrates. This woman, like a whore, decks herself to allure men; her outside is pompous, and enticing to corrupt nature: when that depraved church declined from the simplicity of the gospel, she exerted all her ingenuity to put something in its place, that might be agreeable to giddy mortals; such as the decking and adorning her churches with images of saints, &c. nay, even of God himself, and the blessed Jesus; also their ostentatious manner of worship, carrying the mass through the streets, their employing singing men and singing women, and setting up organs in their churches, &c.

This woman has a cup in her hand; a figure alluding to harlots, who, with their philters and enchanted cups, allure and provoke men to sensual gratifications: in like manner Rome, by her outward splendor, allures, and by her specious pretences, and various means, entices men to her idolatries and superstitions. Lastly, "she has a name written on her forehead;" as whores are represented to be impudent and shameless, so this whore glories in her abominations; bowing down to images, in an open and public manner, contrary to the express prohibition of sacred writ; and all her other superstitious nonsense, in defiance of which, her learned doctors boldly dispute; so that by their doctrines and practices, diametrically opposite to the sacred oracles, it is as easy to read her name, as if it were writ, in legible

characters, on her forehead. This name in her forehead is also called *mystery*: in all ages the devil has endeavoured to ape the true religion, as well in the Heathen, as in the Christian idolatry; as there are mysteries mentioned in the word of God, such as, "the mystery of godliness;" so in 2 Thess. ii. 7. the whore is called, "the mystery of iniquity." In all which, she attempts to imitate Christ, lest she should be discovered.—"Her name, *mystery*, can imply no less than that she deals in mysteries; her religion is a mystery, a mystery of iniquity; and she herself is, mystically and spiritually, Babylon the Great." She glories in the name of Roman catholic, and well therefore may she be called, Babylon the great. She affects the stile and title of Holy mother-church; but she is, in truth, the mother of fornications and abominations of the earth. It may be concluded, therefore, that this part of the prophecy is sufficiently fulfilled; though there should be reason to question the truth of what is asserted by some writers, that the word MYSTERY was formerly written in letters of gold upon the fore-part of the pope's mitre, Scaliger affirms it, upon the authority of the duke of Montmorency, who received his information from a man of good credit at Rome. Francis le Moine and Brocardus also confirm it, appealing to ocular inspection; and when King James objected this, Lessius could not deny it. If the thing be true, it is a wonderful co-incidence of the event with the letter of the prophecy; but it has been much controverted: you may see the authors on both sides in Wolfius. It is much more certain, and none of that communion can deny it, that the ancient mitres were usually adorned with inscriptions. There is one particularly preserved at Rome, as a precious relic of Pope Sylvester I. richly, but not artfully, embroidered

broidered with the figure of the virgin Mary crowned, and holding a little Christ, and these words, in large capitals, underneath, *AVE REGINA COELI*, *Hail Queen of heaven*, in the front; of which father Angelo Bocca, keeper of the pope's sacristy, and an eminent antiquary, has given a copper-plate in the third volume, page 490, of the works of Pope Gregory I.: and it seems more probably to have belonged to Gregory; because he is said to have first instituted, at Rome, the litanies to the virgin Mary. An inscription this, directly contrary to that on the fore-front of the high priest's mitre, *Exod. xxviii.* "Holiness to the Lord."

The two last appellations given to the whore are, "the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth."

This whore is described, as not only filthy and abominable herself, but an enticer and seducer of others; as old bawds, after they are unfit for service themselves, seduce and allure the innocent fair to become prostitutes; so this mother of harlots has seduced all the countries of Europe, and many others, to commit spiritual lewdness, and every abomination that is hateful in the sight of God; and all this under the mark of the strictest sanctity and holiness. These titles can never agree to Heathen Rome; she never propagated errors to others; she was rather a learner of foreign superstitions, than the mistress of idolatry to other nations, as appears in various instances: and particularly, from that solemn rite of adjuration, which the Romans used when they laid siege to a city; calling forth the tutelary deities of the place, and promising them temples, sacrifices, and other solemnities at Rome. But, they agree well to Rome now, in her splendid titles, as Peter's chair, the infallible church that cannot err, the church that cannot be obscured, or ruined,

ruined, the catholic supreme judge of all, &c. : and thus, she has given rise to all the idolatries, and superstitions that have come into the church from her; and, like a kindly mother, has always defended these, and fostered them, as her own brood, through all the world.

In vers. 6. The apostle John, saw the woman drunk with the blood of saints, and martyrs of Jesus: which may be applied, both to Pagan and to Christian Rome; for both have, in their turns, cruelly persecuted the saints: but the latter is more deserving of the character; as she hath far exceeded the former, both in degree and duration of her persecutions. It is very true, as was hinted before, that if Rome-Pagan hath slain her thousands of innocent Christians, Rome-Christian hath slain her ten thousands. For, not to mention other outrageous slaughters and barbarities, the Croisades against the Waldenses and Albigenses; the murders committed by the duke of Aiva, in the Netherlands; the massacres in France and Ireland; will probably amount to above ten times the number of all the Christians slain in all the ten persecutions of the Roman emperors put together. John's admiration also evidently shews, that Christian Rome was intended; for it could be no matter of surprise to him, that a Heathen city should persecute Christians, when he himself had seen and suffered the persecutions under Nero; but that a city, professedly Christian, should wanton and riot in the blood of Christians, was a subject of astonishment indeed; and well might he, as it is emphatically expressed, wonder with great wonder.

Vers. 7. 8. "And the angel said unto me, 'wherefore didst thou marvel,' &c. The beloved apostle is here filled with wonder, not as the ignorant world wondered after the beast; but seems to be at a loss to conceive, what such a description

scription could mean, as the words of the angel imply: though he had seen a type of this beast formerly, yet the expounding some parts of the description is left till now; that hence it might appear, that the knowledge of this mystery should not all at once, but gradually, be manifested; and that the revealing of Antichrist, is chiefly reserved to the last days of his begun ruin; and therefore it is no wonder, that many of the ancient fathers spake obscurely of him.

It was not thought sufficient to represent these things only in vision; and therefore the angel undertakes to explain the mystery, the mystic sense or secret meaning of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her: and the angel's interpretation is indeed the best key to the Revelation; the best clue to direct and conduct us through this intricate labyrinth.

The mystery of the beast is first explained: and the beast is considered, first in general, vers. 8. under a threefold state and succession, as existing and then ceasing to be, and then reviving again, as to become another and the same, "he was and "is not, and yet is;" or, according to other copies, *KAI PARESAI*, and shall come, shall ascend out of the bottomless pit. A beast, in the prophetic stile, as we before observed, is a tyrannical, idolatrous empire; and the Roman empire was idolatrous under the Heathen emperors, and then ceased to be for some time, under the Christian emperors; and then became idolatrous again under the Roman pontiffs, and so hath continued ever since. It is the same idolatrous power revived again, but only in another form; and all the corrupt part of mankind, whose names are not inrolled, as good citizens, in the registers of heaven, are pleased at the revival of it: but in this last form it shall go into perdition; it shall not, as it did before, cease
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for a time and revive again, but shall be destroyed for ever.

Hence we may learn, that Rome, in its complex head, is that beast mentioned here. The pope in his double capacity, both as a temporal monarch and ecclesiastic, pretending to be Christ's vicar, is both that seventh and eighth head; (this we reckon one of the strongest evidences, that the pope is Antichrist; by this the Holy Spirit has put it beyond all doubt, for this can be applied to no other; and it is impossible, with all their chicanery and sophistry, to elude these infallible marks), which was not in John's time; but has arisen since to a power equal, if not superior, to the Roman emperors; having all these ten wounded horns, or kings, of which the Roman empire existed, under absolute subjection; as we will see more fully afterwards.

Verf. 9. 10. 11. " And here is the mind " which hath wisdom," &c. After this general account of the beast, there follows an explication of the particular emblems; with a short preface, intimating, that they are deserving of the deepest attention, and are a proper exercise and trial of the understanding. This expression, similar to that chap. xiii. 18. plainly intimates to us, what heavenly wisdom is necessary to understand this prophetic book; and surely, none but that Almighty Being, who dictated it to his apostle, can make us thoroughly understand it; yet we are by no means to sit down with folded arms, and wholly lay aside the inquiry; but, humbly imploring light and direction from God, we are commanded to search the scriptures; and, by comparing one place with another, we may possibly arrive, at last, at the true meaning of them.

The angel proceeds to give a more clear, and particular description of this beast and whore; viz. " the seven heads are seven mountains;"

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by which we may either understand, the seven governments of Rome, or the seven hills on which she stands, or both: it has been already observed, that there were five different kinds of governments at Rome, before John's time, that the emperors were the sixth, that a seventh was to arise afterwards, which was to comprehend the eight. Some commentators consider Constantine as a seventh head, different from the former, being a Christian emperor; but this was no head of idolatry, which all were; therefore it cannot be any of these heads. But we suppose, this is more properly applied to the hills on which Rome was built. For the sake of those unacquainted with the Roman history, we shall give their names as follows; Palatinus, Cœlius, Capitulinus or Janiculus, Aventinus, Quirinalis, Viminalis, Esquilinus. Romulus, the first king, built upon four of them; Servius Tullius, the sixth king, added three more of them to the city. If then, Rome be the seat, the Romish church is the whore, and the pope Antichrist, who keeps his court there in a special manner; though otherwise, he commands all the world at his pleasure, yet his chair of state is confined to the seven-hilled city, from which it cannot be removed, till he be driven from it altogether. It is observed too, that new Rome, or Constantinople, is situated on seven mountains; but these are very rarely mentioned, and only by obscure authors, in comparison of the others; and, besides the seven mountains, other particulars also must coincide, which cannot be found in Constantinople. It is evident therefore, that the city seated upon seven mountains must be Rome; and a plainer description could not be given of it, without expressing the name, which there might be several wise reasons for concealing.

Bishop Newton, applying this to the seven
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kings, or kinds of government, at Rome, says, "An end was put to the imperial name, in the year 476, by Odoacer king of the Heruli; who, having taken Rome, deposed Momyllus Augustulus, the last emperor of the west. He and his successors, the Ostrogoths, assumed the title of kings of Italy: but tho' the name was changed, the power still continued much the same." This therefore, cannot be called a new form of government; it may rather be considered, as a continuation of the imperial power, or as a renovation of kingly authority. Consuls are reckoned but one form of government, though their office was frequently suspended, and after a time restored again; and, in the same manner, kings may be counted but one form of government, though the name was resumed after an interval of many years. A new form of government was not erected, till Rome fell under the obedience of the eastern emperor, and his lieutenant, the exarch of Ravenna, dissolved all the magistracies, and constituted a duke at Rome to govern the people, and pay tribute to the exarchate of Ravenna. Rome had never experienced this form of government before: and this I conceive to be the other, which, in the apostle's days, was not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. For Rome was reduced to a dukedom, tributary to the exarch of Ravenna, by Longinus, who was sent exarch in the year 566, according to some accounts, or in the year 568, according to others; and the city revolved from the eastern empire to the pope, in the year 727; which is a short space, in comparison of the imperial power, which preceded, and lasted above 500 years; and in comparison of the papal power which followed, and hath now continued above a thousand years. But still possibly you may hesitate, whether this is properly a new form of government; Rome being
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still subject to the imperial power, by being subject to the Greek emperor's deputy, the exarch of Ravenna: and according as you determine this point, the beast that was and is not, was while idolatrous, and was not, while not idolatrous, will appear to be the seventh or eighth. If you reckon this a new form of government, the beast that now is, is the eighth; if you do not reckon this a new form of government, the beast is of the seventh; but whether he be the seventh or eighth; or both, he is the last form of government, and goeth into perdition. It appears evident, that the sixth form of government, which was subsisting in John's time, is the imperial; and what form of government hath succeeded to that in Rome, and hath continued for a long space of time, but the papal? the beast therefore, on which the woman rideth, is the Roman government, in its last form; and this, all must acknowledge, is the papal, and not the imperial."

Verses 12. 13. 14. "And the ten horns which thou sawest," &c.

The angel having pointed out to John what are the seven heads, he proceeds to give a description of the horns; they are ten kings, says he, who have no power as yet. These horns belong to the seventh head, or last state of the beast, which supports the whore. In chap. 12 the former sixth head had ten horns also; that is, they managed the empire by so many prætors, or præconsuls: but there is a great difference here; for this seventh head, called also the eighth king, hath almost the same provinces, and as many of them; but now these horns are crowned. This beast makes use of kings to persecute the saints, and fight for him, as the former used his officers. Thus both have officers, or governors, to support them; but the last hath crowned kings for his instruments. This beast is to have as extensive

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power

power as any of the former, but his vassals are to be crowned kings; who shall submit as tamely to his orders, and whom he shall use as absolutely as the former did his servants.

Here we observe, once for all, that the kings, or horns, mentioned here, are a continued series or succession of them, to arise and continue with the beast, till they turn against him, hate him, &c.

The kings are said to be ten in number. The learned Mede defines them thus, " 1. Britain; 2. Saxons; 3. The Franks, in Gallica Belgica; 4. Burgundians, in Gallia Celtica; 5. Visigoths, in Gallia Aquitania, and part of Spain; 6. Suevi and Allans, in Portugal; 7. The Vandals, in Africa; 8. The Almans, in Germany; 9. The Ostrogoths, in Hungary; and, 10. The Greeks, in the east. Though these have been changing, yet it will be found, upon strict inquiry, that their number has continued, all along, nearly the same. Before the reformation, we may also count ten, *viz.* Scotland, England, France, Spain, Portugal, Denmark, Sweden, Poland, Bohemia, Austria; or instead of these two last, as being subject to the house of Austria, we may suppose the emperor to represent Germany, and the pope Italy. And even at this day, though many of these horns have revolted from his holiness, we will still see ten kings, or kingdoms, adhering to him; *viz.* Spain, France, Portugal, Sardinia, the king of the two Sicilies, Poland, Austria, Bohemia, Italy, and several princes of Germany, of which the emperor is the head.

These kings had received no power, or kingdom, in John's times; they were to rise out of the ruins of the empire which then existed, as afterwards happened; for the northern nations pouring in like a flood upon the western empire, sometime after Constantine removed the seat thereof to Constantinople, divided it into small kingdoms,

kingdoms, or dukedoms, among their followers; who all soon became good catholics, in supporting the whore; and they are to give their strength and power to the beast for an hour; that is, the short time he is to continue: though this beast has already continued long, yet, comparing his reign with eternity, it is short. These not only give their strength to the beast, but are of one mind with him. As horns are useful to cattle, in rushing on their foes, so these horns, being of one mind with the beast, they cheerfully obey his bloody bulls and mandates, in torturing and persecuting the saints; for here, they are said to make war with the Lamb; that is, they fight against Christ, by the opposing the truth of the gospel, and persecuting Christ in his members: but he shall overcome them; and the reason is here assigned; for he is, "King of kings, and Lord of lords." First, he may be said to overcome in his members, when they are enabled by him to continue stedfast, cleaving to the truth, wearying out their persecutors by their patience. Secondly, they overcome, by preserving the truth and a church on earth, in spite of the malice of all his enemies. Even in the darkest times of Popery he had a church, as was formerly observed; and, at the reformation, he overcame, in a more signal manner, by diffusing the light of truth over many countries; nay, we may say, over all of them, as some in every country have renounced his errors. And, lastly, he shall overcome, in a still more remarkable manner, when Turk and Antichrist shall be destroyed, the Jews converted with the fulness of the Gentile nations, and the final destruction of all his enemies.

As we have already far exceeded the bounds we at first prescribed to this essay, we are obliged to omit many arguments, that might be adduced to prove the truth of this doctrine, and refute

the cavils of Bellarmine and others upon this place. Suffice it then, to produce one instance out of many, to shew how easily his arguments may be confuted: "Antichrist, says he, shall raise great persecutions, but these great persecutions have not come as yet; for these that suffer by the pope are but few, and by one punishment, *viz.* fire." In reply, we maintain, that, if the account of the kings making war with the saints be fulfilled, then these persecutions are so too; but that is clearly proved to be fulfilled, by the pope and his horns

We may consider the greatness of a persecution in the following respects: First, in the cause wherefore; when not only the full omitting of truth, but the least opposition to error, or abstaining from their idolatry, the countenancing or performing any commanded duty, is a ground of persecution, that may be called a great one: but never were there less causes laid hold of, than have been by Papists; as having the New Testament in a known language, calling any of their ceremonies in question, eating flesh in Lent, also not answering distinctly to their questions: as an evidence of this, see the rules of the inquisition of Charles V. and Francis I. with all their proceedings in Germany, England, France, &c. We may again consider a great persecution in the effects of it; that is, in the number and kind of the persecuted: not to mention what has already been said on verse 6. Where have we heard of greater numbers slain, and cruelly butchered, in any age of the world, than have been by Papists? especially, in the massacres of Ireland, where, even if devils were capable of compassion, they would have pitied the poor sufferers, &c. Bellarmine himself, *de viciis ecclesie lib. iv. cap. 18.* reckons 100,000 Waldenses slain at one time; if that be not a great persecution, what can be so?

Thirdly,

Thirdly, if we consider persecution in respect of its cruel facts. Can any thing be more cruel than the massacres of Paris? the fifty thousand that were cruelly butchered in Holland? whole Protestant cities burnt to the ground? also, that bloody sentence of the parliament of Aix, in France, executed by the Lord Oped, against Merindol and others in Provence? as Sleiden observes, *lib. xiii. 16*. What hellish tortures have been invented by the Inquisition, that engine of the bottomless pit! The king of Spain put to death his own son, and Philip II. his father's confessor. Likewise observe, their breach of faith; as at Constance, in the case of John Hufs and Jerome of Prague; though the emperor had pledged his word of honour for their safe conduct to and from the place, yet these ghastly fathers obliged him to break it, that they might glut themselves with their blood. What horrid cruelties have they been guilty of, in throwing out the dead bodies of the saints, and denying them Christian burial! their abusing women, spoiling, banishing, starving, and tormenting, are well known to every one who have perused church-history. In the last place, it is great, in respect of the violence and malice with which it has been carried on. If few have been put to death, it is either because they knew them not, or were restrained by God, or external causes, from executing their malice to the utmost. But their laws (such as that of Alphonfus) making it treason to deny the pope, or converse with the Lollards, their bulls, incitements, and promises, to engage some to destroy others, shew their malicious humour.

Now, putting all these together, what persecution has been longer, more severe, and cruel, than this? This demonstration of Bellarmine is therefore full, and proves Antichrist to be already

come, as all the rest; and may be retorted upon them, if this persecution be fulfilled, then is Antichrist come.

Verses 15. 16. 17. 18. In the former part of this description, the whore is represented, like ancient Babylon, sitting upon many waters; and these waters are here said to signify, peoples and multitudes, and nations and tongues. "So many words in the plural number, says Bishop Newton, fitly denote the great extensiveness of her power and jurisdiction: and it is a remarkable peculiarity of Rome, different from all other governments of the world, that her authority is not limited to her own immediate subjects, and confined within the bounds of her own dominions, but extends over all kingdoms and countries professing the same religion." She herself glories in the title of catholic church; and exults in the number of her votaries, as a certain proof of the true religion. Cardinal Bellarmine's first note of the true church is the very name of the catholic church: and his fourth note is amplitude, or multitude and variety of believers; "for the truly catholic church, says he, ought not only to comprehend all ages, but likewise all places, all nations, all kinds of men. But notwithstanding the general current in her favour, the tide shall turn against her; and the hands which helped to raise her, shall also pull her down."

For, in verse 16. the ten horns are said to hate the whore, &c. which is a plain indication, how odious she is now become to these ten kings, who formerly doated upon her. These ten distinct states or kingdoms, verse 12. who, amidst all the revolutions and alterations that may befall them, will subsist under such like distinct governments, during the reign of the beast; and not be swallowed up in universal monarchy, by any who may aspire after it. After the reformation, how
zealous

zealous were people for the truth ! how detestable did Popery appear to them ! This is now construed, by some, into an illiberal and narrow way of thinking : but the Spirit of God seems here to intimate, that when the set time is come to execute judgment on these idolators, no mercy will be shewn them. Even these very nations or kingdoms, with their respective potentates, which were engaged in the support and advancement of the whorish woman, shall, in God's appointed time, grow weary of her tyranny, oppressions, frauds, and abominable corruptions in doctrine and practice. It is very remarkable, that these very persons, who have been most enslaved by the pope, shall be made use of for the above purposes ; when they come to see how grossly he has imposed upon them, they shall be incensed against, and abhor him more than ever they loved him. This may teach us to revere the wisdom and sovereignty of God, who having the hearts of all kings and others in his hand, makes them subservient to accomplish all his own glorious purposes. Wherefore Papists may lay their account to meet with no mercy from those enraged horns ; for they shall withdraw their protection from the whore, turn their arms against her, strip her naked of all her riches, pomp, and power and lay her waste by fire and sword ; which shall not only destroy her, but be as tormenting to her as though they were to gnaw her flesh from off her very bones, and burn her to death by devouring flames ; as was foretold by the prophet Daniel, chap. vii. 11. ; and as the daughter of a priest was to be burnt, Lev. xxi. 9.

To conclude, the last description of this woman is, a great city that ruleth over the kings of the earth : this city represents the civil and ecclesiastical authority and dominion of the pope, and his consistory of cardinals, that is to be seated in and
raised

raised to its height at Rome, the great metropolis ; which, and no other, is, at this very time, to be considered as the mistress of the world ; which bears sway over many kings of the earth, and particularly over the nations of the empire. In John's time she was mistress over most of Europe, a great part of Asia, and the maritime parts of Africa.

Papists alledge here, that the pope cannot be Antichrist, because, say they, he arose not from the bottomless pit ; but hath God's warrant, by being Peter's successor. To this we reply, that we find no warrant in scripture for the titles and names he assumes to himself ; nor is there any such office-bearer, mentioned by Christ or his apostles, as pope, *pontifex maximus*, vicar of Christ, universal pastor, his holiness, bishop of bishops.

Again, the matters wherein they exercise their power, viz. to dispense with oaths, and obligations of men to each other ; to dispose of, and transfer kingdoms, crowns, and titles ; to dispense with unlawful marriages ; constitute new holidays ; to change worship ; send to Purgatory, and bring out of it, at pleasure ; to indulge and give pardon, even for sins to be committed ; to absolve from, and forgive sins, without regard to the qualifications contained in the divine oracles, only to such as perform some foolish superstitions, or obey such orders as they prescribe ; to canonize saints, and thereby create gods to be worshipped ; and many more, too tedious to relate. All these are contrary to the word of God, and can proceed from no other source but from the bottomless pit : for how is it consistent with common sense, that God should authorize any mortal to assume to himself his own incommunicable attributes, which we have shewn to be done by this monstrous beast ? for what is not warranted by, or agreeable

to the word of God, must be from the devil, though an angel from heaven should declare the contrary ; yet such is the power pleaded for in the pope.

If we consider it further, in the particular properties wherewith they qualify the pope's power, as it is essential to his threefold crown, twofold sword, and keys, we will find it equally absurd and ridiculous : they say, that his power extends over heaven to open it, sitting up saints to be worshipped, commanding angels to take the charge of Purgatory, and of the whole world, as they have sometimes done in their bulls ; over the dead, to torment or relieve them at pleasure ; and over the living, in all things spiritual and temporal ; over persons ecclesiastic, as they call them, and over emperors, kings, and states, to command them to war or peace, as they please : and to act as supreme over them all, ratifying the election of emperors and princes, or not, at his pleasure, and disposing of their crowns to others ; and also to usurp dominion over mens consciences. That this power is absolute, supreme, universal, and independent, not only of all kings, but of all councils and decrees, to which he giveth authority as he thinks proper, and they are of authority, or not, as he confirmeth ; also to all traditions, and even to the sacred writings, without whose authority they would not be accounted sacred by Papists. As Basilus says, in the 12th question of the first part of his catechism, " otherwise he would no more believe the evangelist Matthew than Titus Livy. All affirm, that the church gives authority to the scriptures as to us, and no decree of the church hath authority but from the pope."

Hence, according to the plenitude of his power, he appoints such books, as he thinks proper, to be canonical, and has added many to the former canon,

canon, which preceding councils never acknowledged as such; and he causeth traditions and fables to pass for truths, at pleasure; in all this, say they, he acts in such a sovereign manner, that no one dare say to him, What dost thou? They also aver, that he is infallible; as being free from error. His determination is the first rule; and that is, because he will have it so. Is not this acting the part of Antichrist with a witness?

Our Saviour says of himself, "All power is committed to him in heaven and earth, by the Father." Nay, says the pope, this is my prerogative, I claim every power that was conferred upon Christ as mediator; that my character, as Antichrist, may be the more perspicuous. Will any one then dare to say, that this power, which I have blasphemously usurped, is not from God? all these Papists plead for, as essential to the pope's power, without which, say they, he would not be pope; and indeed they count them so essential, that, for the most part, they make them fundamental to Christianity; and yet they are, not only contrary to revelation, but even to common sense. Herein Antichrist, according to the prophecy of him, exalts himself above all that is called God. God, in his infinite goodness and mercy to the human race, has given them a revelation of his will, in all things pertaining to salvation, and has added a curse to any who shall add to, or take from it. But, says the pope, these books are imperfect, they need my pruning hand; they must be corrected, and amended by me, before the church can receive them as authentic. Can there be a more evident demonstration that the pope is Antichrist, than this? can any proposition in Euclid be more clear, and self-evident, than the accomplishment of this prophecy? Here indeed, his pride and arrogance appear most conspicuous. What! tell God, as it were, to his face, that

that he lacked wisdom to appoint laws and regulations to his creatures ; but the infallible pope, it seems, knew better than his Maker, what was necessary to be revealed. Let Papists then deny, if they dare, that the pope is Antichrist ; seeing it is beyond all dispute, that he reckons himself wiser than God ; since he has had the daring effrontry to alter one *ista* of revelation. But, alas ! what is man when left to himself ? how is he tossed about by the devil, and made to believe the grossest falsehoods !

What would it avail the world to have received a revelation from God, if these things are true, that the pope, or any created being whatever, should have power to alter any part of it. What greater affront can be put upon infinite wisdom than this ? Hence we may conclude, that the power, founded upon such pillars, cannot be of God ; for, if no such power is committed to any, then there can be no popes ; because these are essential qualifications in him. Therefore, their doctors seldom determine any dispute by the sacred oracles, but by such a decree of such a pope, and the like.

C H A P. XVIII.

After the account we have given of the state and condition of spiritual Babylon, there follows a description of her fall, and destruction ; in the same sublime, and figurative stile, as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, have foretold the fall of ancient Babylon and Tyre ; the types and emblems of this spiritual Babylon. We have formerly observed, that this chapter is a further, and much clearer, illustration of the fifth vial. A mighty and glorious angel descends from heaven, in vers. 1. &c. and proclaims, as before, chap. xiv. 8. the fall of Babylon ; and, together with her punishment, the crimes which deserved it, her idolatry

satry and wickedness. This is called mystical
 Babylon, in allusion to ancient Babylon; resem-
 bling her in pride, self-exaltation, cruelty, op-
 pression, sorcery, and witchcraft, Jer. li. 7. Al-
 so in punishment: the destruction of old Babylon
 was sudden, Isaiah xlvii. 9.; a perpetual destruc-
 tion, Isaiah xliii. 20. compared with Revelation,
 chap. xi. 10. and xviii. 20. It was called Baby-
 lon, because of its greatness and glory; it was
 the strongest, and best fortified city in the world.
 Cyrus besieged it thirteen years, before he took it;
 which he accomplished at last, by cutting the chan-
 nels, and draining off the river Euphrates from it.
 Also, in regard of her great power and dominion:
 old Babylon said, Are not my princes altogether
 kings? and mystical Babylon ruled over all the
 kings of the earth. This mighty angel proclaim-
 ed, with an exceeding majestic, loud, and arti-
 culate voice, saying, in the very words that
 foretold the overthrow of the Chaldean Babylon,
 and were accomplished in the destruction of the
 same, (Is. xxi. 9.) to this effect; the papal hier-
 archy and power, which, for persecution, pride,
 idolatry, and all manner of abominations, may
 be stiled mystical Babylon; whose dominion is of
 great authority, and wide extent; will soon be
 as certainly destroyed, as if it had already actual-
 ly happened; and shall fall from all her riches,
 grandeur, and power, into the most deplorable
 ruins: and to certify this with the greater vehe-
 mence, and assurance, he repeats the words, "is
 fallen;" and added, that, instead of her former
 pomp and splendor, she shall be as hideous and
 desolate, as the most depopulated and forlorn
 desert, that is haunted by demons or satyrs, and
 all unclean spirits, which were wont to rove about
 in such places, Luke xi. 24. and that is the re-
 ceptacle of doleful creatures; such as the screech-
 owls, cormorants, bitterns, and all sorts of loath-
 some

some fowls, which usually dwell in horrid ruins and solitary wildernesses, and make a dismal noise; agreeable to what was denounced against ancient Babylon, Is. xiii. 19.—22. and xiv. 23. The word here, which we translate *satyrs*, the Septuagint translated *daimonomia*, demons or devils; who were supposed, sometimes, to take the shape of goats or satyrs, and to haunt forlorn and desolate places: and it is from the translation of the Seventy, that the apostle has borrowed his images and expressions. But if this fall of Babylon was effected by Totilas, as Grotius affirms, or by Alaric, king of the Visigoths, as the Bishop of Meaux contends, How can Rome be said, ever since, to have been the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird? unless they will allow the popes and cardinals to merit these appellations. See Bishop Newton *in loco*.

This Babylon is fallen, never more to arise or torment the church of Christ; how great shall be the joy of Zion at her downfall? how earnestly ought the lovers of Zion's prosperity to pray for it? When Babylon is fallen, then will persecution for religion cease, and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord, &c. Rome, now in ruins, is said to be haunted with devils: these infernal spirits, formerly tempted her to commit all manner of wickedness; and, as a kind of addition to their punishment, they are doomed to inhabit those dreary mansions. It is added, in the third verse, "That all nations
" have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her
" fornications," &c. All under her jurisdiction have been intoxicated by her idolatries, that expose her to, and will bring upon her the dreadful wrath of God; which she deserves, and must suffer, for her spiritual fornication: and she has not only been guilty of this abominable crime
Z herself,

herself, but the kings of the earth, who had given their power to the beast, chap. xvii. 17. have been prevailed upon, by her enchantments, to support and join with her in idolatrous worship, which is spiritual whoredom. Her merchants, as was said above, are the Roman clergy, who trade in wares most precious, no less than the souls of men; pretending to sell them pardons, indulgences, and other such trinkets, by which many of them have been enriched. All things are vendible at Rome; sin is pardoned for silver, and every unlawful desire indulged for gold; these are the reasons, here assigned, for her destruction.

Verf. 4—8. “Come out of her my people,” &c. Another solemn proclamation, coming immediately from the throne of God in heaven, is heard, saying to those that belong to him, but are mingled with this apostate church, Forsake her communion, lest ye be partakers of her sins and her plagues; and at the same time denouncing, that her punishment shall be great and extraordinary, in proportion to her crimes. But was there any such necessity of forsaking the church of Rome, in the days of Alaric or Totilas, before she had yet degenerated into idolatry? or what were her notorious crimes, deserving of such exemplary punishment? unless Rome-Christian, was to suffer for Rome-Pagan.

“For her sins are reached to heaven,” &c. As if the angel had said, The superstitious and idolatries of the church of Rome, are now come to their full height; as God said of the old world, that he would destroy man from off the face of the earth, for their wickedness; and of Canaan, that the measure of her iniquity was filled up. Wherefore, seeing Papists have continued obstinate, though the light of the gospel shines around them, and they have had many opportunities, since the reformation, to be convinced of the
 absurdity

absurdity of their foolish tenets, their sins are aggravated, and their punishment will be doubled; as, in the 6th verse the people of God are commanded to reward her as she has done them. This is required, not from a private spirit of revenge, which Christianity expressly forbids, but in a righteous war, such as the present. We earnestly advise all the Protestant princes to join, with heart and hand, in such a glorious cause. You are commanded by the dread Sovereign of the universe, to reward these persecutors and oppressors of mankind, as they have done to his church and people. If ever there was a time for Protestants to unite, it seems to be the present. France and Spain, two very formidable powers, have joined in alliance with the rebellious subjects of Britain, against her. But why should we say against her? for they are equally disposed to ruin the other Protestant powers, and utterly extirpate the Protestant religion. Why then do you linger? Rouse, rouse, Heaven invites you; nay, your own interest, every thing that is dear to you, invites you to assist oppressed innocence. What will be the consequence, if you remain neuter till Britain is ruined? Will not all these Popish powers be on your top? Will you be a match for them all? Surely not. Whatever you may do in this matter, we are warranted, from the sacred records, to tell you, that God will not suffer the rod of the wicked always to lie on the back of the righteous; but if you shall refuse to assist, he is able to do without you: he can easily make one chase a thousand, and a thousand put ten thousand to flight. You are commissioned from heaven, to multiply calamities double upon these idolatrous nations, even to their utter destruction, not from a revengeful spirit, but as authorised instruments of divine justice, in punishing them to the utmost, for all their evil deeds;

Z 2

especially

especially for their breach of oaths, and the most solemn treaties of which you are guarantees. This we shall leave at present, being persuaded, that he who has all hearts in his hand, needs not our feeble aid to manage the affairs of mankind; and though he may suffer a wicked nation to punish his own people for their ingratitude, yet, in the end, they shall prevail; and these idolatrous and perfidious nations shall suffer the effects of his just indignation.

Hence we may see, what blood-thirsty Papists may at last expect; namely, to receive, at the Lord's hand, double for all their crimes. Babylon's punishment shall be double, in respect of what she has acted, but not so, in respect of what she has deserved; if possible, let her have a double quantity of blood to drink, more than she has shed; for one drop of the blood of Zion, is of more value than an ocean of hers: give her therefore double, for though it is more in quantity, it is less in quality. Observe, how suitable the punishment inflicted on Babylon will be to her sin: her sins were pride and insolence, luxury and voluptuousness. She said in her heart, I sit as a queen; she did not only say simply, I am a queen, but I sit as a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow: she glories, like ancient Rome, in the name of the eternal city; but notwithstanding, she shall be utterly burnt with fire: "for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her." These expressions can imply no less, than a total destruction by fire; but Rome hath never yet been totally destroyed by fire. The most that Alaric and Totilas did, was burning some parts of the city; but if only some parts of the city were burnt, it was not an event important enough to be ascribed to the Lord God particularly, and to be considered as a strong exertion of his judgment. I am raised, says she, to an elevated station,

tion, having many subject to me, able to support me against every reverse of fortune; little dreaming, how near she was to the brink of ruin. This may teach us, that all human efforts are vain, when God is against us: he can humble the mightiest monarch, as he did Nebuchadnezzar; who, in imitation of this haughty city, said, Is not this great Babylon which I have built? &c. Worldly men fancy to themselves an eternal felicity, in the enjoyment of sublunary things. They imagine themselves seated on downy pillows, soft and easy, and secured on rocks of adamant. Observe also, the luxury and voluptuousness of this full-fed city; she lived deliciously, in costly palaces, stored with all the delicacies of the western world, and rioted in all the enjoyments which could satiate a sensual appetite. And her judgment bears a strict proportion to her sin; for, says the inspired penman, How much she has lived deliciously and glorified herself, so much torment and sorrow give her. The justice of God, will exact all the arrears of his abused mercy; such men who now fare deliciously every day, (ah! I shudder to relate their doom), shall pass, from their good things here, into flames which live by the breath of God's revenging wrath. Ah! lamentable exchange; one hour's feeling the acute pains of that unquenchable fire will be more tormenting, than many thousand years enjoyment of the pleasures of sense can be satisfying. Let us now take a view of the equity, rapidity, and multiplicity of Rome's punishments: the equity is, because of her former sins, her plagues shall come; the rapidity of them is thus described, they shall come upon her in one day, that is, suddenly and unexpectedly; and the multiplicity and variety of them, are here particularly expressed; 1st, Death, for putting the saints to death; 2d, Mourning, for their former rejoicing; 3d, Famine, for starving the peo-

ple of God; lastly, Burning, for her having burnt so many martyrs. We may observe, in the last place, the reason assigned for all these plagues coming upon Rome: "for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her." Though Rome's strength be great, when supported by the emperor, and so many kings and states as still adhere to her; yet far stronger is Zion's king, than all creatures combined in one, and the cause which he is about to vindicate, is his own. Will it then be in the power of any to prevent him? Sooner shall fire and water unite, than God be at peace with spiritual Babylon:

Vers. 9. "And the kings of the earth," &c. shall bewail her. Here a difficulty seems to arise. It was formerly said, that the kings who had committed fornication with her, should hate the whore, and burn her flesh, &c. Now some of these kings are still favourers of the pope, after he is driven from Rome, till the battle of Armageddon, when both he and they shall be utterly destroyed. This is perfectly consistent with what was formerly said, that the pope is to muster up all his forces, against the church, at that great battle; therefore, some of his admirers, will always continue faithful to him to the last.

If it should be asked, Why kings bewail and lament so much for that apostate city? We reply, that some of them are still drunk with the wine of her fornications, and cannot lay aside that pomp of external worship, by which their magnificence and grandeur is exalted; and they are wedded to a natural, formal way of worship, but cannot endure the simplicity of the gospel. They have been long entertained, by that court, with pompous titles; the emperor has got that of Protector of the church; Spain was called the Catholic, France the Most Christian, king; these vain titles must then be lost. Besides, all men, especially the great, love an easy, indolent form

of worship, such as Popery is, that they may get dispensations to their oaths, and incestuous marriages, as many Popish kings do; *viz.* the king of Spain with his own niece, the king of England with his brother's wife; and that they may have freedom to sin, since they can obtain a pardon, and be indulged, in the commission of any crime, for money. Likewise, there is, in the heart of unrenewed men, a natural enmity against God and his word; and they now see the true religion fast gaining ground on the ruins of Popery: this cannot fail to give them great pain and uneasiness. And, lastly, the fear of sharing in her punishment, may perhaps make them afraid, because they have been partakers in her sins. The next who lament, are merchants; and no wonder, for their loss is great. These are either real merchants, who traffic in these kind of wares which Rome makes use of, in order to support her outward grandeur and luxury. Four kinds of these are mentioned; 1st, Every thing that serves to deck or adorn the body, in a splendid and gorgeous manner; such as gold, silver, precious stones, pearls, fine linen, scarlet, purple, &c. 2^d, Such things are necessary for ornamenting an house; as sweet wood, ivory, vessels of precious wood, brass, iron, &c. 3^d, Things for regalling the palate; as spices, cinnamon, odours, wine, sheep, oxen, wheat, &c. Lastly, Whatever things serve for outward shew, and equipage in peace and war; as horses, chariots, and slaves. In fine, whatever is delicious or agreeable, are still used at Rome by their dignified clergy. Some of these things are also used in their religious service; as gold and silver, for making images, and ornamenting their churches; likewise purple, for their cardinals, and fine linen, for their relics.

Now, how can men, who deal in these wares,
which

which sold at a great price in Rome, be easy when all their gain is gone. Though Rome be destroyed, yet these merchants might vend their goods elsewhere; therefore, it must be some other sort of merchandise, which is meant here; for it is added, in the end of verse 13. “ and “ souls of men.” This traffic, as was said, has been carried on at Rome, and to great extent; that is, selling souls out of purgatory, with their dispensations and indulgences; this has been a profitable trade, carried on at Rome, chiefly by the pope, cardinals, &c. No wonder they cry out, alas! alas! when all these diabolical schemes prove abortive, and the light of the gospel discovers their futility.

In verse 17. the angel proceeds to the inferior clergy, or the under-rowers of Peter's bark, as they may be termed: the lamentation of these is still greater than the former, as being more sensibly touched with their loss, and, probably, more blinded than the former; they cast dust upon their heads, bitterly regretting the destruction of that city, that was unrivalled in her pomp, and unequalled in her ruin; they lament for that which was most dear to them. These priests, monks, friars, and Jesuits, the retailers of her pardons, indulgences, and other trumpery, &c. compassed sea and land to make profelytes, who got their living by this trade; and may be represented, in allusion to the lamenters of Tyre's ruin, Ezek. xxvii. 29.—33. under the emblem of masters of ships, and all the shipmates, and mariners, and all traffickers in them by sea: All these, as unable as the kings and merchants, vers. 9. and 11. to help her, shall likewise get out of the reach of her calamities, as far as they can; for fear of sharing in her punishments, as they had in her crimes and gains.

Verse 18. And when they shall behold the dismal tokens of her utter ruin, like the thick and gloomy

gloomy columns of smoke, that rise from every part of a city all in flames, they shall cry out, with amazement, lamentation, and horror, saying, as was reported of Tyre, Ezek. xxvii. 32. What city so grand and magnificent, wealthy, powerful, and proud, was ever so entirely, and speedily involved in misery and ruin, as this great city, together with her vast dominions! this is beyond all that could have been imagined.

Verse 19. She made all that traded in ships rich. That is, all her dependers, in abbacies and convents; her priests and Jesuits, (who are now under a cloud), and all inferior orders and officers, who are subservient to this great city in her merchandise, and providing for her vending her wares, carrying them through the world, and bringing back returns. All these spiritual mariners depend upon Rome's standing: it is no wonder these should cry, in a lamentable manner, how shocking are her desolations and miseries! who has been in such a flourishing state, as to enrich all her devotees, that carried on traffic for and with her; employing their ships to export pardons, indulgences; &c. which were sold, and purchased at costly rates, by her authority. What a surprising, sudden, and miserable change is made upon her! for in one hour is she reduced, and spoiled of all her former wealth, power, and grandeur; utterly incapable of any further assistance to her servants, or receiving any from them.

In the 20th verse, the angel proceeds to shew how great and full that ruin was, by the vast joy and rejoicing it justly gave to the people of God. By heaven, apostles, and prophets, may figuratively mean, that heaven, and all its hosts, shall rejoice at, and praise God for it: or, it may signify the church; and the prophets and apostles may signify, all the ministers of the gospel, and their successors in office, to the end of the world. These
rejoice

rejoice because God is glorified in the accomplishment of his promises, concerning Rome's destruction, and the further spreading of the gospel; this they, and their predecessors, long prayed for; which must heighten their joy, when God makes it appear, their prayers were heard and answered. These have reason to be exceeding glad, because God has now awfully displayed his terrible justice, and the truth of his predictions, in taking full vengeance, for their sakes, upon this corrupt and persecuting power; which would fain have destroyed the foundation of the church itself, and all that are built upon it.

Verse 21. And still further to confirm all this, as the prophet Jeremiah was ordered to bind a stone to the book he had read, and cast it into the midst of the Euphrates, saying, "Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise, from the evil that I will bring upon her," Jer. li. 63. 64.; so here, a glorious angel, who excelled in strength, took up (as appeared in this vision) a huge stone in his hand, as a great millstone, and threw it with mighty force, into the midst of the sea; into which it suddenly sank, never more to rise again: and, to explain the meaning of this emblematical action, he said, after this manner, shall that great city, Rome, and all her power, authority, and magnificence, be suddenly cast into utter destruction; and never shall be rebuilt, or recover strength and dominion, or have any place in the world at all, from henceforth, for ever.

Verf. 22. 23. These two verses need little or no explication; only we may observe, on the 22d, that judgment is denounced against Rome's musicians, who lent their aid to corrupt the worship of God. We observed, in the former part of this essay, that as soon as the Romish church began to fall off from the simplicity of worship, they behoved to put something else in the room of it.

Therefore,

Therefore, among many other ceremonious additions, music was introduced, in a more pompous and shewy manner than formerly; for they introduced organs, and other instruments of music, besides singing men, and singing women, into their churches. These are all doomed to destruction, and shall no more be heard in Rome.

Verse 24. What particularly adds to all the provocations of that wicked city, and aggravates her crimes, condemnation, and misery, and loudly proclaim the justice of God's judgments upon her, is, that she has filled up the measure of the cruelties and murders, which have been practised upon the faithful ministering servants and people of God, and upon all that, by her authority, canons, and decrees, have ever been put to death for righteousness sake throughout her territories, and to the utmost extent of her influence upon earth; as, by her persecutions, she has approved of, imitated, and exceeded all that ever went before; and so the blood of all martyrs for Christ is found in her skirts, and, by just construction, is chargeable upon her. See Matth: xxiii. 29. to 35. And therefore, God shall give her blood to drink, for she is worthy. "But Rome hath never yet been depopulated and desolated in this manner: she hath been taken, indeed, and plundered, by Alaric, king of the Visigoths, in the year 410; by Genseric, king of the Vandals, in the year 455; by Totilas, king of the Ostrogoths, in the year 546; and by others since that time; but yet she is still standing and flourishing, and is honoured, by many nations, as the metropolis of the Christian world: she still resounds with singers and musicians; she still excels in arts, which serve to pomp and luxury; she still abounds with candles, and lamps, and torches, burning even by day as well as by night: and consequently,

ly, this prophecy hath not yet been, but remains to be fulfilled." See Bishop Newton.

Three reasons follow, which we shall only name. The first is, that her merchants were the great men of the earth, which plainly shews, that this trade, wherein they were employed, was illegal; otherwise it could never be a cause for Rome's destruction. The second reason is, her sorceries, whereby she deceived the world; this may either be taken literally, as was formerly said, or spiritually, meaning her enticing people to idolatry and superstition. The third cause is bloodshed, or persecution; she being the last persecutor, and head of all persecutions in the Christian world, whether by inquisitions, massacres, or wars, she is found guilty of all, for the reasons formerly assigned, and her punishment will rise in proportion.

The application of this is plain and obvious; if this Babylon be Rome, as Papists themselves declare, then must it belong to the Popish or Antichristian Rome, which now is, and not to Heathen Rome, under the emperors. For the crimes, procuring those punishments, are such as Rome is actually taken in the guilt of, and many presently are acting in it; but that idolatry and persecution of ancient Rome are laid aside long since. Also, this ruin is on a whore, and therefore such crimes as belong to one making defection; which cannot be applied to Heathen-Rome.

C H A P. XIX.

This chapter, as we observed formerly, is a kind of commentary on the sixth vial, in chap. xvi. and was only slightly touched in that chapter; the event, of the battle of Armageddon, is supplied here. We shall assign two reasons (beside what we said on chap. xvi.) in order to prove that this belongs to the sixth vial. First, this chapter immediately

mediately succeeds to the exposition of the fifth vial in the last chapter, and comprehends other events, not on the seat of the beast himself, who surviveth his seat ; and it is put before the exposition of the seventh vial, the object of which is not the beast, (as in this chapter), and his adherents, but on Satan's kingdom indefinitely ; who is taken and cast into the lake where the beast and the false prophet were cast before him ; they are to be thrown into it by this sixth vial. This must then belong to an event after the fifth, and before the seventh, by and under which the beast will be destroyed, before the seventh come, as his seat or throne was by the fifth vial.

Again, it is plain, that the event of the battle, described in this chapter, is the same with that whose preparation is described chap. xvi. under the sixth vial ; it therefore, of course, belongs to it : for all these vials bring judgments on the beast, or pope of Rome ; and if this event belong not to the sixth vial, but to the preparation only, then it cannot bring a plague on him ; for the plague consists not in the preparation to the battle, but in the unfortunate event thereof to him, which this chapter contains ; and mentions nothing of his preparation for it, which was done chap. xvi. but proceeds to the event, which was suspended therein, its discovery. The sixth vial contained two remarkable effects : the one pointing out the increase of the church, and a great accession to her ; the second, describing the rage of Antichrist at that increase ; agreeable to which, this sixth chapter consists of two parts : First, of exultation and rejoicing at these glad news, to verse 10. Secondly, of the overthrow of the pope and his followers, to the end. What is mentioned in verse 10. is not prophetic, but applicable only to John's behaviour, and that of the angel.

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It is not agreeable to our design, to give a minute explication of this chapter, but only make a few remarks upon it. In the first part of this song, we perceive the church rejoicing over Rome's destruction, and giving particular invitation to the Jews, to join with her in that delightful work, suitable to that invitation, *Is. ii. 5.* The second part informs us, what kind of welcome they shall receive from the church, upon their coming home. So that both parts have some reference to the calling of the Jews, as was said, chap. xvi. Now, when the stumbling-block of Popery is quite removed, the Gentile church intreat and persuade the Jews to join her in the general acclamation: this will also suit the time of the Jews conversion, which must be before the end; it likewise agrees well to these prophecies in *Is. ii. 5.* and *Mic. iv. 3. 4. 5. &c.*

Again, it suits well with these expression Allelujah, in Hebrew, addressed to them, which is not used in former songs. And finally, these made ready are the Lamb's wife, who had formerly a peculiar interest in him, which the Jews had under the Mosaic dispensation; and he may be said to reign, with propriety, after their conversion; all which, could not be properly said without them.

The church's song, verse 1. is ushered in with the Hebrew word Allelujah, compounded of two Hebrew words *HALEL* and *JAH*, signifying, Praise ye the Lord, or, Praise God. It is often the beginning and end of many psalms. This word is very fitly used by the Jews here, as an exhortation to all men, to laud and extol their dear Redeemer, whom they had long slighted and despised, to whom the cross has been a stumbling-block; there can no other reason be assigned, why this word is so often repeated in this song, and in no other in this book. In verse 3.

this

this word is again repeated, when the smoke of Rome's torment is said to ascend up for ever and ever. It is no wonder, that these now happy people should be filled with ecstasies of wonder and praise, when they behold the ancient prophecies accomplished in their own conversion, and the eternal perdition of that Antichristian church, which long debarred them from these high privileges.

“ And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.” Which, says Bishop Newton, “ intimates, that she should be made as signal a monument of divine vengeance as Sodom and Gomorrah. It is taken from Isaiah, who hath said much the same thing of Edom; and, by Edom, the Jews understand Rome, *Is.* xxxiv. 9. 10. “ And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch.” In the genuine editions of the Chaldee paraphrase it is, “ And the rivers of Rome shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever.” This tradition of the Rabbins may receive some confirmation from these words of the apostle: and such an event may appear the more probable, because the adjacent countries are of a sulphureous and bituminous soil; there have been, even at Rome, eruptions of subterraneous fire, which have consumed several buildings; so that the fewel seemeth to be prepared, and waiteth only for the breath of the Lord to kindle it.

Verse 7. the church exults for joy at the marriage of the Lamb. The marriage of Christ with his church is mentioned in scripture three different ways. 1. In the offers of the gospel; wherein, by the powerful operation of the Holy Spirit, many are espoused, and engaged by faith to embrace a crucified Jesus. This hath been, and

will continue to be the common method of espousals, to the end of the world. 2. At the end of time it is consummated and perfected, when the queen is brought unto the King, and shall abide with him for ever. Lastly, When the fulness of the Gentiles is come, with the conversion of the Jews, this is a more distinguished marriage than the first; because the old branches are again grafted in, and a divorced wife is again brought back to her duty. What multitudes may we then expect will be converted, both of Jews and Gentiles over the whole world; which is emphatically expressed by the apostle, "as life from the dead," as we have frequently observed. And if we may be allowed to form a conjecture, Providence seems at present to be paving the way for these great events; and, perhaps, making these Popish kings (whose sole aim is to pull down and destroy) the means of accomplishing his glorious designs, in diffusing the light of the gospel to nations yet unborn.

From verse 11. to the end of this chapter, we have an account of a glorious battle between two armies, of very unequal strength. The captain, on the one side, is no less a personage than the King of kings and Lord of lords, whose vesture was dyed in blood, whose name is the almighty *Logos*, or *Word of God*. This illustrious Captain was followed by the armies of heaven, clothed in fine linen, &c.; which we conceive to mean, not only angels and glorified saints, but also the church-militant, especially with that large addition of Jews and Gentiles, formerly mentioned. On the other side is the beast, or pope, and the kings of the earth and their armies, who are gathered together to make war against him that sat on the white horse, as formerly described. Surely the reader will not hesitate a moment, to determine on what side the victory will

will fall. What are all the potsherds of the earth, when contending with their Maker? This glorious Captain, however, had long permitted that ravenous beast to usurp his prerogative on earth, impiously and blasphemously calling himself his vicar, in order to deceive the nations with a greater shew of sanctity; in imitation of his master, who, in holy writ, is said to transform himself into an angel of light.

However, our almighty Leader will not suffer him always to triumph: hitherto we have seen him pouring out the vials of his wrath upon that Antichristian tyrant, who had long soaked the earth with the blood of his saints; we have also seen him expel this monster from Rome, to seek shelter elsewhere; in order to be revenged for this loss, as was observed on chap. xvi. he musters up all the malignant powers he can, against the church of the Jews and Gentiles. The event follows, in vers. 20. and 21. this beast, who is also called the false prophet, chap. xvi. 13. who pretended to work miracles in the sight, and under the protection of the beast, and by his lying wonders imposed upon and deluded the nations, that had openly professed subjection to the beast, and in token of it, wore his mark, and paid idolatrous worship to him, and the images which he had set up as objects of religious adoration. Both these idolatrous and persecuting powers, which may be differently conceived of, in their civil and ecclesiastical capacities, chap. xvi. 13. fell as captives into the conquerors hands. And as the chiefs of rebellious armies, when subdued and taken prisoners, are wont to be punished in a most exemplary manner; so these who were the ringleaders in the general apostacy and severe persecutions, and chiefly in this war against Christ, his people, and cause, shall be most grievously tormented, like persons cast alive into an abyss

of fire, burning like Sodom and Gomorrah, with an intense and everlasting flame, as if it were mingled with brimstone, to feed and maintain it with the fiercest rage, that it may never be quenched. By this we may conclude, that no pope shall, for the future, any where be found; though some may still be hankering and wondering after him, to the end.

But it would seem, that many of them shall be conquered by the sword that goeth out of the mouth of Christ, *v. z.* the gospel; so that Popery shall never more infest the earth after this total overthrow, and the great millennium commences in its full import, when the devil who tempted the nations is bound. Yet we see, under the seventh vial, that great Babylon comes in remembrance before God; probably, in the time of Gog and Magog, Popery may perhaps be again revived; for it has always been the case with the church, when she enjoyed long peace, that errors have imperceptibly crept in; and after the expiration of the thousand years, Satan is to be loosed out of prison, and go out to deceive the nations, and to gather them together to the battle against the saints. Then shall all the enemies of Christ be cast into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, along with the devil who deceived them, where the beast and false prophet were before them.

Before we conclude, it may not be amiss to offer some reflections on this chapter, and answer some objections, that have been made against this doctrine.

With what joyful acclamations will the militant church join in the Allelujahs of the church triumphant in heaven, when God shall take vengeance on Turk and Antichrist, and all the kings and princes that have confederated with them; when the marriage-supper of the Lamb is come.

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They will then ascribe salvation, glory, honour, and power, to him that sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, who will then be universally acknowledged as the Lord God Omnipotent, and the only Saviour of lost sinners, whose kingdom rules over all; as will then most evidently appear. How infinitely happy are they who are invited to the marriage-supper of the Lamb; and shall be presented to him, in robes of spotless righteousness, as a bride gorgeously adorned for her husband! How glorious will our enthroned Mediator appear, when he comes, riding on the white horse, to espouse his people's cause, and inflict vengeance on the combined forces of those that rose up in rebellion against him! and when all true Christians, beautifully arrayed, in robes of his spotless righteousness, shall march along with him in his illustrious train, and be made partakers in the happy fruits of his victories; which they also obtain through him! he will then be openly acknowledged to be the true essential Logos, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; titles that belong to none but the Deity. Righteousness, truth, and faithfulness, pervade all his glorious designs; his unerring wisdom, and universal dominion, his just indignation of vice, his just and righteous administration of the world, and the execution of his awful schemes, will then be eminently displayed, typified; as it were, by flames of fire darting from his eyes, by many crowns on his head, by a sharp sword proceeding out of his mouth, by his garments sprinkled with the blood of his enemies, his ruling them as with a rod of iron, and his treading them under foot, as ripe for destruction, in the wine-press of the fierce wrath of Almighty God. Alas! what dismal havoc will then be made on all the enemies of truth and righteousness, however exalted their rank and station may be, like dead carcases left
unburied

unburied on a field of battle! The beast, and false prophet, with all the tyrannical, persecuting crews, that supported and assisted them, shall be severely punished; like the chief leaders of a rebellion, who are thrown alive into a sulphureous lake of unquenchable fire; and their whole army shall be utterly destroyed. Then all the saints shall be commanded to share the rich spoils, that they have been, uselessly, for many years, heaping up in their churches, cloisters, and elsewhere; like fowls of the air, that feed on the bodies of dead men, as their prey.

We shall now proceed to the objections. Some are of opinion, that the final destruction of Antichrist, is reserved for Christ's second coming; as we have it in 2 Theff. ii. 8. "Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming." But before we give a direct answer to this objection, we shall premise a few things: and first, it is certain, that this judgment of the beast is not at the end of the world, for it is under the sixth vial. Again, it is a judgment wherein armies of saints are employed, and the word, or gospel, is made use of at this ruin; which cannot be the case at the last judgment. Further, in this judgment of the beast, and of his being cast into the lake, a difference is made between him and his followers, who are judged in a different manner; as in verse 21. and their casting in, is suspended for some time; but there is no such difference at the last judgment. Lastly, there are some events yet to happen after this, for the devil is not yet cast into the lake, which is done by the seventh vial, at the judgment of the great, or last day; and yet the beast is in the lake before him, therefore this judgment is before the last, by which the devil is cast where the beast and false prophet are before him; as is evident, chap. xx. 12.

Now,

Now, in answer to the question, it may be said, without impropriety, that the final end of Antichrist's kingdom, shall not be before the end of the world, his kingdom being complexly considered; yet it does not prevent him and his seat to be destroyed before that time. We imagine the place in 2 Thess. ii. 8. cited above, cannot apply to Christ's last coming to judgment, but his coming to execute judgment on that whore; for, in chap. vi. it is called the great day of God, when he only came to judge the Heathen emperors. It is said, in the forecited text, that he shall consume them by the breath of his mouth; that is, by the power of the preaching of the word, Papists shall be converted, as at the reformation: and therefore, the brightness of his coming, riding triumphantly in the chariot of the gospel, assuming to himself that power. And that agrees well with the meaning both of that passage and this.

If, from that forecited passage, any one should further object, that two distinct things are mentioned in it; first, he is to consume them by the spirit of his mouth; but the second, his destruction, is reserved for Christ's second coming. We reply, that Antichrist's fall shall begin long before its end: that it shall be fully completed at the general judgment: that whatever befall him now, he shall be judged then. All these may be true, and our sentiments of it too; we maintain that he shall be judged at his particular judgment, and at the general judgment likewise; and though it be ordinary, in the sacred records, to design the last day for the time of the persecutors destruction, and the saint's deliverance, because both are perfected at that day; yet as it cannot be affirmed, that there are not former judgments, or deliverances, so neither can it be in the present case; besides, it being in the close of the sixth vial,
and

and after the conversion of the Jews, which, probably, may not be long before the end.

The last thing we shall observe on this chapter is, that this beast is said to be cast into the lake alive; we are not here to suppose, that he is not to share the common fate of mankind, and be exempted from a natural death; but this, we may suppose, is spoke in allusion to Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, upon whom the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up alive; which, perhaps, may be the case with that arch-enemy of the church of Christ. Or, it may more probably point at the dreadful and irrecoverable doom that awaits him. As he, and his predecessors have, for a long time, opposed the truth, and made dreadful havoc of the people of God, who would not join in his idolatrous worship; God, who is jealous of his glory and honour, and to whom idolatry is most odious, will, probably, bring upon that beast some very remarkable judgment, that his people's faith may be the more confirmed; and that Infidels may revere his power, and be afraid any more to injure his chosen ones.

We have now traced out Antichrist, in his rise, progress, decline, and final doom, with as great brevity and perspicuity, as we could, though, we are afraid, this essay has swelled to a much greater bulk than we at first intended; but, we flatter ourselves, that the additions which have been made to it, will more than compensate for the addition of the price; though we would wish it may be made as cheap as possible, that the poorest labourer may be able to purchase it. And if it shall be a mean, in the hand of God, of opening the eyes of some of those poor deluded creatures, who have been entangled in the snares of Popery, or prevent the simple and unwary from being deceived by their wiles, we have gained our end, and shall ascribe the glory of it to
God,

God, who first inclined us to attempt an explication of a book, which has puzzled men of the greatest abilities and learning: therefore it cannot be expected, that this should be perfect; yet as we have followed the sentiments of some of the most approved authors upon the subject, we hope it will not be altogether useless.

No doubt many of our readers will reckon us uncharitable, for our severity against Papists, or rather the Popish religion, which many now-a-days seem to be mightily fond of. But though some unguarded expressions may have escaped our notice, in our zeal for the glory of God, and the welfare of our fellow-mortals; yet we beg leave to adopt the sentiment of the eminently pious, and learned Mr Hervey, in his reflections on a flower-garden, page 180. "Between Christians, says he, whose judgments disagree only about a form of prayer, or manner of worship, I apprehend, there is no more essential difference, than between flowers which bloom from the same kind of seed, but happen to be somewhat diversified in the mixture of their colours. Whereas, if one denies the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and degrades the incarnate God to the meanness of a mere creature; if another cries up the worthiness of human works, and depreciates the alone meritorious righteousness of the glorious Mediator; if a third addresses the incommunicable honours to a finite being, and bows to the image, or prays to the saint:—These are errors extremely derogatory to the Redeemer's dignity, and not a little prejudicial to the comfort of his people. Against these to remonstrate; against these to urge every argument, and every dissuasive; bespeaks not the censorious bigot, but the friend of truth, and the lover of mankind. Whereas to stand neuter and silent, while such principles are propagated, would be an instance
of

of criminal remissness, rather than of Christian moderation. For the persons, we will not fail to maintain a tender compassion ; we will not cease to put up earnest intercessions ; we will also acknowledge and love whatever is excellent and amiable in their character : yet we dare not subscribe their creed ; we cannot remit our assiduous, but kind endeavours, if, by any means, we may reconcile them to a more scriptural belief, and purer worship."

As we observed above, we have, in some places of this essay, expressed ourselves unwarily, and harshly : but our meaning, and real sentiments, as the same learned author expresses himself, " were no other, than those represented above." The reader, from such unguarded intimations, might naturally be led to conclude, that the author avows, and would stir up a spirit of persecution. But this is a method of dealing with opponents in religious doctrines, which he disclaims as absurd ; and abhors, as iniquitous. He is for no force, but that of rational conviction ; for no constraint, but that of affectionate persuasion. Thus, if you please, compel them to come in, Luke xiv.

THE APPENDIX.

" The dispensations of God, though various in their kind, and different in their administration, have all been directed to one regular and consistent purpose ; the restoration of the lost posterity of Adam to immortal life and happiness, which was forfeited by the transgression of their common parent. To announce so glorious a design, and to give testimony to the character and mission of the adorable person entrusted with its execution, was the declared use and intent of prophecy ; which, commencing from the fall, and

and reaching through a protracted course of ages, to the general consummation of all things; was calculated to furnish, to succeeding generations, a suitable, and, in proportion as it was seen to be accomplished, an increasing evidence, that the end and object of all that God had spoken, by the mouth of his holy prophets, since the world began, was ultimately one, even Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come.

But as the advantages to be derived from such a prophetic system, could have been but ill secured, had the information it was meant to communicate, been imparted to all nations without distinction; the same goodness, which suggested the end, directed also the means; and contrived that the notices, which God was pleased to reveal of his future dealings with the children of men, should be continued to one people; who were selected from the rest, that they might be the depository of the sacred oracles; and that in their records, the golden chain of prophecy, let down from heaven to earth, might be preserved entire. Hence it is, that all the predictions of the Old Testament, are found, mediately or immediately, to concern the fortunes of the Jews; and that the state and condition of the Gentile nations, are no otherwise included within the discoveries of the divine prescience, than as they happened to be connected with this favoured family; sometimes employed by the supreme Ruler, as instruments of vengeance to inflict on a rebellious people the terrible denunciations of his justice; at other times, used as ministers of grace, to convey to them, and to mankind, the saving influences of his mercy.

How august and magnificent is this idea of the Almighty's government; who, when he first separated the sons of Adam, and divided to the nations their inheritance, did so adjust the

clashing interests of contending powers to each other, that all should eventually conspire to promote his own eternal purposes, with respect to his chosen people, and to the religion of his son. When we contemplate, in the faithful page of history, the multiform and shifting appearances of human things; when the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, are passing in review before us; and we see empires rise and fall, at those very points of time, which the great Parent of the universe, by a fixed and unalterable destiny, had pre-established; when we perceive the mighty power of the Babylonians give place to the Medes and Persians, they, in their turn, are subdued by the Greeks; and these again, by the superior valour of the Romans: we are abashed and mortified by such a survey of the perishing monuments of earthly pride; we feel the force of such awakening of the sovereign dominion of God; and acknowledge, with pious awe, "That the Most High ruleth in the kingdoms of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will." But assisted by the lights which revelation furnishes, we discern these several empires, under the controul of an Almighty will, carrying the secret designs of God, with respect to his church and people; and forming, as it were, a prophetic chronology, to mark the period in which the kingdom of Christ, for which the world had been ripening for four thousand years, should begin and end; when, with the eye of faith, we behold Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus, Alexander and the Romans, insensibly ministering to the sublime intentions of providence, and ignorantly concurring to advance the triumphs of the cross; our thoughts are relieved and enlarged, amidst the amplitudes of such conceptions, inferior considerations pass away, and no affection remains to the overwhelmed and enraptured mind,

mind, but that of holy joy and gratitude, in return for such exuberant goodness, which hath thus amply provided for the present and future happiness of its creature, *Man.*" See Mr Samuel Halifax on the prophecies.

Our Saviour informs us, that though two sparrows are sold for a farthing, yet one of them shall not fall to the ground, without permission of his heavenly Father: thus we may plainly perceive, that all created beings are the objects of God's preserving goodness; how much more is man, the peculiar favourite of Heaven! as our Saviour adds, Matth. x. 29. &c. "Ye are of much more value than many sparrows, and the hairs of your head are all numbered;" plainly intimating to us, the special care of God towards his own people, from the beginning to the end of time. Whatever is therefore foretold in scripture, concerning the rise and fall of kingdoms, must certainly be only as far as they are connected with his church, or were to be made instruments in his hand, either of punishing her when backsliding, or as furthering the designs of providence, in restoring, protecting, and defending her, upon her reformation and repentance. In order to confirm this point a little more fully, we shall produce the authority of another great man, Mr Richard Hurd, page 75.

"I suppose it to be very conceivable and credible, that the line of prophecy should run chiefly in one family and people, as we are informed it did; and that the other nations of the earth, should be no further the immediate objects of it, than as they chanced to be connected with that people.

Prophecy, in the ideas of scripture, was not ultimately given for the private use of this or that nation; nor yet for the nobler and more general purpose, of proclaiming the superintending pro-

vidence of Deity, (an awful truth, which men might collect for themselves, from the established constitution of nature), but simply to evidence the truth of the Christian religion. It was therefore confined to one nation, purposely set apart to preserve and attest the oracles of God; and to exhibit in their public records, and whole history, the proofs and credentials of an amazing dispensation, which God had decreed to accomplish in Christ Jesus."

Now, to apply these two quotations to our present purpose, it will be proper for us to observe, that though we have, in a manner, anticipated what remarks we are further to make, yet we would chuse to be as explicit as possible, in a matter of such vast importance, and handled by men of far greater learning and abilities than we pretend to, and for whom we have the highest esteem; as an evidence of which, we have already given large extracts from one of them, *viz.* Bishop Newton; and we also design to end this Appendix, with a very large quotation from that celebrated author; who, with Mess. Lowman, Daubuz, and others who wrote before him, have applied the plagues and judgments mentioned in the Apocalypse, to the Roman empire; especially in the seals and trumpets, without taking any, or very little notice of the church, during the time of them. On the contrary, we have applied the prophecies of Daniel, Paul, and John, mostly to the church; for, as has been formerly observed, we cannot imagine the Spirit of God who dictated these prophecies, would wholly overlook the state of the church for so long a space of time, seeing all former prophecies seemed to centre, in a great measure, in that single point alone; we mean Christ and his church: but whatever was predicted concerning the surrounding nations, was only in reference to their connection

connection with her, either ancient or modern. As an evidence of this, no hint is given us of many great empires and kingdoms of the world, but what are connected with her.

We would not, however, be understood to suppose, that the judgments denounced in that sacred book, are wholly to be applied to the persecutions of the church, &c. but they may have a double accomplishment in both. For, as Dr Hurd says, page 61. "There is reason to believe, that more than one sense was purposely inclosed in some of the prophecies; and we find, in fact, that the writers of the New Testament give to many of the old prophecies, an interpretation very different and remote from that which may reasonably be thought the primary and immediate view of the prophets themselves. This is what divines call the double sense of prophecy; by which they mean an accomplishment of it, in more events than one; in the same system indeed, but at distant intervals, and under different parts of that system." Therefore, supposing that to be the case, we see no reason either to exclude the church, or her enemies, from having their share in those judgments denounced and predicted in that sacred book.

We shall endeavour to compromise the matter with these learned gentlemen who have gone before us, as far as possible, in a consistency with truth. As we have already observed, there is a uniform method preserved in prophecy, from the beginning of Genesis, to the end of Revelation; whatever is predicted in the Old Testament, which does not particularly concern the Jews, or after them, the Gentile church, but has a reference to the surrounding nations, such as the Assyrians, Babylonians, Macedonians, Romans, and others; it concerns them no further, as was said, than as they have some connection with the

church. At the same time, the history of the Jewish nation is distinctly narrated in all its particular circumstances; but no such history is given of any of these nations in sacred writ. Can we suppose the same infinite wisdom, which dictated the Apocalypse, would concisely foretel all the little trifling events of the Roman empire, and overlook the dreadful persecutions of the Christians, both under the emperors and popes; also the decline of primitive Christianity, and the rise and progress of Popery, especially in those seals, trumpets, and vials, which comprehend the whole space from John's time to the end? Surely not: the same symbolical way of writing, and the same kind of images, are strictly observed by the inspired penman; as Bishop Newton very pertinently remarks. Why then exclude the church, in a great measure, more than formerly, from being the chief object of this prophecy? Doubtless, the events that were to happen to the surrounding nations, alluded to in it, are only as episodes in a poem; but the church is the chief theme of the prophecy. Now, supposing this to be the case, (which we think is pretty evident, from what has been said), we give it as our opinion, (with all due deference to men of superior talents), that these extraneous events, are only secondary parts in the great scheme of revelation; and ought neither to be wholly excluded, nor yet to exclude others, which appear to be the chief design of the prophecy.

Now, supposing a reconciliation has taken place, and that Protestants view things in the same light with respect to Antichrist, especially as to the principal characters of him, recorded in scripture; and that many of them, at least, have been shewn to belong to the tyranny now existing in papal Rome. For, as Mr Halifax says, in his eleventh sermon on prophecy, "First of all,

all, this power is certainly a Roman one. 2. It is confined to the limits of the Latin or western empire. 3. It arose among the ten kingdoms, into which that empire was parted by the northern Barbarians. 4. Its throne or seat, is the city of Rome. 5. It is a Christian power. And, 6. It is discriminated from all others, by being of the spiritual and ecclesiastical kind."

First then, In the primitive church, the parity of bishops was admitted without exception; and no one had any pre-eminence over the rest, but what arose from the dignity of the see to which he was elected. On this account the bishops of Rome, which had so long been the seat of government, and the metropolis of the western world, were entitled to some degree of respect, over and above what was due to prelates of inferior districts; and the same honour was paid to the bishops of Antioch and Alexandria, as rulers of the earliest of the Christian churches; and afterwards to the bishops of Constantinople, when the imperial residence was transferred to that city: but the distinction of rank and pre-eminence, thus tacitly allowed to these four bishops, was not thought to imply a distinction of power and authority. They, with others of their brethren, were equally bound by the laws and edicts of the emperors; all were alike supposed, to have received their function from the appointment of Christ alone, and not from any concessions of the successor of St Peter. And when, so early as the third century, the Roman pontiff presumed to domineer above his fellows, the attempt was treated by Cyprian bishop of Carthage, with the utmost scorn and indignation.

It happened, toward the close of the following century, (about the year 372) that a law was proposed by Valentinian, and accepted by the unwary

unwary prelates in terms of approbation; that all the disputes which might happen to arise among the members of the Episcopal order, should be referred for the hearing of the bishop of Rome: the reason assigned was, that religious differences might not be carried before profane or secular judges; and probably the law itself was merely temporary, at least was never designed to extend beyond the suburbicarian provinces, the only ones within the jurisdiction of the Romish see. From this circumstance, we may date the origin of that spiritual despotism, which the popes found means to erect, and to which all Europe was induced to conform with unlimited obedience. It is curious to trace the steps, by which so wonderful an influence over the minds of men was effected.

After passing of the above law, it became no unusual thing, for subordinate prelates, when invaded in their rights, to have recourse for assistance to the Roman bishop; who, far from being displeased at such an application, always decided for those who fled to him; and took an easy occasion from thence, to increase his own authority and importance. The declining state of the emperors, added to their absence from the imperial city, was a new opportunity offered to the popes, to govern there without controul; and the quarrels so famous in history between the bishops of Rome and Constantinople, the one aiming at supremacy, the other more moderately labouring to preserve his independence, and which did not end but with the total separation of the Latin and Greek churches, are an ample proof, that the same endeavours to gain an ascendancy, were not wanting in the east. But the accessions of power hitherto acquired, were much too scanty to satisfy the growing ambition of these ghostly rulers. Not content with the advantages, so fraudulently

fraudulently obtained over their brethren of the hierarchy, they asserted next, as visible heads of the church, their authority was superior to that of all synods and councils, whether provincial or general; none of which, it was pretended, could be legally convened, but by their permission; and whose determinations were of no validity, unless enforced and ratified by their sentence. It was an easy step, after this, to proceed to whatever higher degrees of arrogance they pleased; to assume the disposal of ecclesiastical offices, and honours of every kind; to demand an exemption for themselves, and for all the orders of the clergy, from secular justice; to promote appeals to their own courts; to exalt their own decisions, and those of the canons, above the injunctions of scripture; and, in a word, to act in all respects, as divinely appointed monarchs of the church of Christ. Nothing remained to render the system of tyranny complete, but to exert the same transcendent prerogative over princes and sovereigns, as they already exercised over the bishops and clergy; from the ceremony permitted to them of crowning, to infer the right of making kings; of absolving subjects from their allegiance; of trying, condemning, and destroying refractory monarchs; and transferring their sceptres to new masters, more subservient to their will. Nor was it long before the ill-judged munificence of the emperors, on whom, till now, they had been dependent, enabled them to reach this sublimest pinnacle of priestly pride; and, in consequence of a power derived to them from Jesus Christ, to degrade to the lowest acts of humiliation, to excommunicate their benefactors, and depose them. The execution of this last impiety, which had been meditated before, was kept for the times of the profligate Hildebrand, better known by the name of Gregory VII.; whose political

litical discernment, and intrepid temper, unchecked by any restraints from moral principles, qualified him, in an eminent manner, to advance the papal supremacy to its greatest height. And to this species of oppression, which was hereafter to have place in the Christian church, the prophets are thought to prelude; when they hold out to us Antichrist, as having a mouth speaking great things, and a look more stout than his fellows, and thinking to change times and laws, Dan. vii. 20. 25.; as opposing and magnifying himself, above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, 2 Thess. ii. 4.; and causing all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive his mark in their forehead, Rev. xiii. 16.

Secondly, The Redeemer of mankind, before he ascended to heaven; from whence compassion to a miserable world had brought him down, delivered to his disciples a rule of faith; which was by them committed to writing in the New Testament; and by which the most ordinary capacity may be furnished with that wisdom, that will make him wise unto salvation, 2 Tim. iii. 15. To this rule, which, in the strictest sense, may be called infallible, we Protestants profess solely to adhere; so that whatever proposition is not, either expressly, or by fair and logical consequence, deduced from it, ought not, of necessity, to be made an article of a Christian's creed. But a rule, so direct as this, was but little suited to the crooked politics of the church of Rome; which therefore, in defiance of a positive command, Deut. xii. 32. Rev. xxii. 18. 19. has added to the doctrines of God's book, a long list of others, handed down, as is alledged, by tradition, through a course of seventeen hundred years; and to be received with the same reverence as holy scripture. If it be asked, 'How are we to know,

know, that none of these traditional doctrines have been changed, or mutilated, in passing through so many hands? we are answered, they have always been admitted as genuine by the judgment of the catholic church; and that judgment, in matters of faith at least, is infallible. If we go on to ask, In what part of the catholic church this same infallibility resides? some of their writers tell us, it is in the pope; others, in a general council; a third sort, in the pope and a general council together; whilst others maintain, that it is diffused through all the members of the Romish communion; and others again, that it exists in the collective body of Christians, wherever situated in the world. When Protestants are urged for a reason of the hope that is in them, 1 Pet. iii. 15. they refer, with confidence, to the written word; which is the only authorised standard of theological truth, and comprehends whatever is required from a Christian, either to believe or do. When Papists, to this original and all-sufficient rule, would add another, derived from tradition, which they recommend to us as more complete, and also as infallible; we reply, that all tradition is uncertain in its nature; and on the boasted quality of infallibility, we can have no reliance, since the very church, which claims to be in possession of it, has never yet been able to determine where it is to be found.

If the church of Rome be thus culpable, in arrogating to itself infallibility, it is equally to be blamed for assuming another divine attribute, the forgiveness of sins. The conditions, on which this invaluable privilege was granted to those who were converted from a state of Heathenism to Christianity, were repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, Acts xx. 21. As to such who are already professed Christians, and, through infirmity or surprise, have
fallen

fallen from their integrity, they are to exercise faith and renewed obedience for the future. To publish these offers of mercy, to an unbelieving and guilty world, was the great business of the apostles ministry; when, in virtue of a commission from their Lord and master, they went forth preaching peace by Jesus Christ, Acts x. 34. and proclaimed, to Jew and Gentile, the glad tidings of that religion; according to the terms of which, as then declared by them on earth, every man's sentence, whether of acquittal or condemnation, would be finally decided in heaven, Matth xvi. 19. John xx. 23. Further power of absolving or retaining sins, the apostles themselves had not; and we have no reason to conclude, that greater authority, in so important a point, is conferred on their less enlightened successors. Yet the church of Rome, with a boldness that is beyond conception, has dared to alter the original conditions of acceptance promulged in the New Testament, and to impose others of its own; of which, it is hard to say, whether they be more repugnant to sense or honesty. Instead of that pious sorrow, which flows from the love of God, and worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of, 2 Cor. vii. 10. they have substituted what they call attrition, or servile fear of punishment, accompanied with absolution, if it can be had, as sufficient for the remission of the greatest guilt. Instead of that amendment of life, which both scripture and reason affirm is the one thing needful to regain the favour of our offended Maker, they teach, that confession to a priest, together, with an arbitrary penance enjoined by him, is of ample merit to atone for the breaches of the moral law. In derogation of the purifying efficacy of the blood of Christ, which, as the apostle speaks "cleanseth us from all sin," 1 John i. 7. and discharges all its stains, they pretend, that
souls

souls in a separate state are purged from the defilements contracted here, by the fire of a fabulous purgatory. And by the scandalous doctrine that pardons for every iniquity, whether committed or designed, may be purchased for money, and the more scandalous practice of exposing indulgences to open sale, they have vacated the obligations to that holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord, Heb. xii. 14. Who now that reflects on such an impious invasion of the prerogative belonging to God alone, and at the same time remembers what is said in the sure word of prophecy, 2 Pet. i. 19. of the great corruption that was to happen in after times in the church of Christ, can help being persuaded, that the instances now advanced were principally in the minds of the inspired penmen, when they described Antichrist, as speaking marvellous things against the God of gods, Dan. ix. 39. sitting as God in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God, 2 Thess. ii. 4. and opening his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, Rev. xiii. 6. ?

Thirdly, No sooner had the Christians emerged from a state of persecution, under the Heathen emperors, than comparing, as was natural, their present and past conditions, they were led to contemplate, with an uncommon degree of approbation, the character of these holy men, who, by the purity of their lives, and constancy of their sufferings even unto death, had given the most honourable attestation to the truth and excellence of their religion, and had been the instruments of procuring for them much of the peace and security they now enjoyed. Gratitude, affection, every virtuous movement of the mind, concurred to promote so just an esteem for persons so highly deserving; and many were incited to emulate such glorious examples, and to be follow-

ers of them who through faith and patience inherited the promises, Heb. vi. 12. But the confines of right and wrong, like those of light and shade, are separated by narrow, and almost imperceptible limits; and, from a due regard to an extravagant veneration, the transition was too easy. The fathers of the fourth century, instead of moderating this growing evil, inflamed it by their indiscretions. The tombs of the primitive Christians were chosen as fit places for the exercises of devotion; the graves where their bodies had been deposited, were sought with an over-cautious diligence; visions and revelations were called in, to discover their relics; which were preserved with the most anxious care, as never-failing remedies against the power of evil spirits, and natural diseases; and as the Gentiles, from honouring their heroes, exalted them into demons, or inferior divinities, so Christians, from the same principle of superstition, operating in similar circumstances, advanced their martyrs into heaven, and invoked them as the bestowers of present and future blessings. All these errors were fostered and increased, by the bigotry of the church of Rome; in which, real angels, and fictitious saints, are equally addressed, as the patrons and advocates of mankind; and the intercession of the virgin Mary, in particular, is supplicated, as even more available than that of her holy child Jesus. Among other instances of unlawful adoration, invented by the same idolatrous society, we may reckon here, that most shocking and absurd one, which is paid to the bread and wine in the celebration of the eucharist. This practice was originally begun on an opinion, first conceived by an enthusiast of the ninth century, that the elements after consecration transubstantiated, or changed, into the body and blood of Christ; and such a doctrine, how-

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ever contradicted by the palpable testimony of sense, being calculated to inspire ideas of awe and horror, which are always wanted in a false religion, was erected, in the thirteenth century, into an article of faith, not to be refused under pain of damnation. The form of worship was equally reprehensible with the objects of it. Images and pictures of those who had acquired the fame of singular piety, were early made, and almost as early looked up to, as animated with the presence of the persons whom they resembled. And though this species of religious homage was opposed, and with various success, for 120 years, it afterwards obtained the sanction of the second council of Nice, and has been continued since, without interruption, among the votaries of the papal see. It is superfluous to add, that all the observances, mentioned here, are not only not commanded in scripture, but are in direct violation of it; inconsistent with the services we owe to God, even the Father, and irreconcilable with that exclusive regard we are enjoined to pay to the mediation of his Son. Yet, unscriptural and forbidden as they are, they were distinctly foretold, many ages ago, by the holy prophets; when they represent the apostacy of the latter times, as consisting in honouring, together with the true God, *Mahuzim*, that is, angels and departed saints, in giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines concerning demons, and causing the earth, and them that dwell therein, to make an image to the beast, Dan. xi. 38. 39. 1 Tim. iv. 1. Rev. xii. 12. 14.

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Fourthly, The same spirit of superstition which produced an idolatrous veneration of the martyrs, discovered itself in another and more extraordinary way. The Roman republic, among other useful institutions, proposed rewards and honours for the encouragement of lawful matrimony; and

Constantine himself had indirectly favoured this state, by granting the benefits of legitimization to children born in concubinage, provided the parents intermarried afterwards. But the notions which then began to prevail, of the superior merit of celibacy, induced this emperor to depart from his own wise maxims, and to repeal the famous Papian law, enacted by Augustus, for the express purpose of conferring privileges on those who were the parents of a numerous offspring. The Christians, already tinged with fanaticism, eagerly adopted the ideas of the reigning prince; and, deprived of the opportunity of displaying their zeal, by dying for the cause of Christ, were fond of inflicting voluntary sufferings on themselves. In order to cultivate a more intimate communion with God, multitudes, of both sexes, retired into caves and deserts; where, abandoning all human connections, they devoted themselves to a rigorous poverty, and single life. These principles and practices were 'nothing more, at first, than the genuine effects of simple superstition; but the Roman pontiff, with his subtlety, took advantage of the ruling weakness, and converted it into one of the most powerful engines to extend his own dominion. That crafty prelate was too sensible, not to perceive, that the chief circumstance, which attached the clergy to secular concerns, was the love they bore their children and families; and that thing was more likely to subdue them to an entire conformity to his will, than depriving them of this object of affection, and engaging them solely to the interests of their own order. To promote this design, the most extravagant praises were lavished on a single life; which was recommended as highly laudable in all, and urged as the indispensable duty of those, who, by their office, were obliged to an exemplary purity, and admitted

mitted into a nearer intercourse with Heaven. This master-stroke of policy was effected in the eleventh century, by the intrigues of Gregory VII. ; when, in spite of the propensities of nature, in spite of the plainest directions of scripture, which commends the state of marriage in general, as honourable in all, Heb. xiii. 4. and gives particular precepts concerning that of bishops, presbyters and deacons, 1 Tim. iii. 1. 11. Tit. i. 6. the primary command of Providence was blasphemously infringed, and an inviolable celibacy was imposed on all the orders of the clergy. But thus it was, that the spirit of prophecy had before declared ; by which we are taught, that the same Antichristian power, which should enjoin the worship of demons, should not regard the desire of women, Dan. xi. 37. ; and that, among other abominable doctrines introduced by him, this of forbidding to marry should be one, 1 Tim. iv. 3.

Fifthly, The religion of Jesus, like that of Moses, was established by signs and wonders ; which are the proper credentials of a revelation coming from God, and were attended with all these characters of truth, which the most scrupulous enquirer could demand. They were exhibited in public, before enemies and friends, in a learned and inquisitive age, and on the most eminent theatre in the world ; they were employed in the consideration of doctrines worthy of God, and of the utmost importance to mankind ; they were accompanied with no appearance of vanity or ostentation, and brought no gain or advantage to the performers ; and all of them are attested by persons, who gave the most decisive proofs of their integrity, by chusing rather to die than to deny them. On this footing the evidence for the gospel-miracles stands, and the testimony which establishes them, is so circumstanced, that its falsehood would even be more miraculous, than

the miracles it relates; so that, by the confession of scepticism itself, the most academic faith, without incurring the disgrace of incredulity, may afford them its assent. The religion of papal Rome also boasts its prodigies, and of the most astonishing kind: but, instead of recommending themselves to the belief of a sober examiner, they bear about them the plainest indications of fraud and folly. Many have been detected by contrary evidence; many detect themselves by their absurdity; some are related by suspicious persons, others are wrought for suspicious purposes, to soothe the errors, and subserve the interests of a party: and besides the innate marks of falsehood with which they abound, they are of that very sort, which are recorded in scripture, as clear and unerring notes of Antichrist: for thus it is, that the son of perdition is portrayed by St Paul and St John; whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders; and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by means of the miracles which he hath power to do.

Sixthly; But we have not yet attained the complete idea of Popish pravity: For when now the Roman pontiff had worked his way to a supremacy, unknown; and unallowed in the church of Christ, and on the strength of that supremacy had proudly arrogated divine honours; when he had contaminated the purity of the Christian faith, by the worship of idol-mediators; and trampled on the rights of humanity, by an unnatural, and uncommanded celibacy; and to all these instances of corruption, had added the illusive arts of pretended miracles; then it was that he filled up the measure of his guilt, by exerting his ill-gotten power, to the horrid purposes of persecution. This last contrivance, the opprobrium of human nature, as well as of revealed religion, though permitted

permitted to disgrace other communities, was nowhere reduced into a system but in the church of Rome: and there indeed we find the principles of this system laid open, and exemplified in all their dreadful forms; sometimes occasionally, in the cruelties exercised towards those faithful witnesses, who refused to worship the image of the beast, Rev. xi. 3. and xiii. 15. and more professedly in that infernal tribunal of the inquisition. Here again, as the sacred prophets have condescended to notice other parts of this extraordinary character, we are the less to wonder, if this, the finishing one, be particularly described; first, by Daniel, where the little horn makes war with the saints, and wears them out, and prevails against them, Dan. vii. 21. 25.; and afterwards, by St John, where Babylon, the mother of harlots, is drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, Rev. xvii. 6. and xviii. 24.

It may be thought, that the errors here objected to Popery, to which a variety of others might have been added, were introduced by popes, whose private vices were as flagitious, as their public government was tyrannical. But the truth is, all the Roman bishops, from the reign of Constantine, uniformly laboured to extend their jurisdiction; and with unrelaxing perseverance carried on the same scheme. The hands which held the reins of empire, were changed; but the spirit which guided them was the same. Every new pontiff adopted the schemes of his predecessors; and one encroachment was still succeeded by another, till at length the fabric of superstition was perfected, and towered above the clouds.

And here, by way of application, we may observe, that all endeavours to effect a reconciliation with the church of Rome, must ever be vain and fruitless. Such a comprehension, even upon
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the moderate plan that has been proposed by Grotius, and others, is absolutely impossible. The Roman communion, by its absurd pretences to infallibility, has precluded itself from receding from any of its most obnoxious tenets; and Protestants, from the very nature of their principles, are incapable of making any concessions. What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? what communion hath light with darkness? what concord hath Christ with Belial? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you; and I will be a Father unto you; and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty," 2 Cor. vi. 14. 15. &c.

No doubt many of our readers will be apt to accuse us of plagiarism, or, at the best, to tell us, that our essay has little or no originality in it, but that it is, almost entirely, a collection from other authors who have wrote before us upon the subject. To which we reply, what are most books that have appeared for these several years past, only with this difference, that many of these elegant authors have taken the sentiment of others, and clothed it with a new dress, perhaps, more refined than some of their predecessors? and though none of them, which we have seen, have inserted in their work so long extracts as we have done, yet all of them have, less or more, followed the same practice. The reader will easily perceive, that even the learned Bishop Newton, with an extract from whose excellent performance, we design to conclude this Appendix, has given some pretty large extracts from others.

In his recapitulation of the prophecies relating to Popery, this very judicious and learned bishop says, "Upon the whole it appears, that the prophecies

phesies relating to Popery, are the greatest, the most essential, and most striking part of the Revelation. Whatever difficulty or perplexity there may be in other passages, yet here the application is obvious and easy. Popery being the great corruption of Christianity, there are indeed more prophecies relating to that, than to almost any other distant event. It is a great object of Daniel's, and the principal object of St Paul's, as of St John's prophecies; and these, considered and compared together, will mutually receive, and reflect light from, and upon each other. It will appear to be clearly foretold, that such a power as that of the pope should be exercised in the Christian world; and should authorise, and establish such doctrines and practices as are publicly taught and approved in the church of Rome. It is not only foretold that such a power should be exercised, but the place and persons also, are pointed out; where, and by whom it should be exercised. Besides the place and persons, the time also is signified, when it should prevail, and how long it should prevail; and at last, upon the expiration of this term, it shall be destroyed for evermore. It is thought proper to represent the prophecies relating to Popery in one view, that, like the rays of the sun collected in a glass, they may appear with the greater lustre, and have the stronger effect.

I say, the spirit of prophecy hath signified before hand, that there should be such a power as that of the pope and church of Rome, usurped in the Christian world: and these predictions are so plain and express, that was not the contrary evident and undeniable, they might seem to be penned after the event; and to describe things past, rather than to foretel things to come. For instance, hath there now for many ages subsisted, and doth there still subsist, a tyrannical, idolatrous,

idolatrous, and blasphemous power, in pretence Christian, but in reality Antichristian? It is the very same power, that is pourtrayed in the little horn, and blasphemous king, by Daniel; in the man of sin, and son of perdition, by Paul; and in the ten-horned beast and two horned-beast, or the false prophet, by St John. Hath the church apostatized, or departed greatly from the purity of Christian faith and worship? It is the very same thing that the apostle Paul hath foretold, 2 Thess. ii. 3. The day of the Lord shall not come, except there come a falling away, or the apostacy first: and he saith in 1 Tim. iv. 1. that the spirit of prophecy, (meaning, in Daniel), had, in express words, testified the same thing before. Now the spirit speaketh expressly, that in the last times, some shall depart from the faith, or rather apostatize from the faith: and John saw the church so far degenerate, as to become (Rev. xvii. 5.) the mother of harlots or whoredoms, and abominations of the earth. Does this apostacy consist chiefly in the worshipping of demons, angels, and departed saints; and in honouring them with costly shrines, and rich offerings, instead of the worship of the one true God, through the one true Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus? Nothing can better agree with the prophecy of Paul, 1 Tim. iv. 1. some shall apostatize from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines concerning demons; and with the prophecy of Daniel, (chap. ii. 38.), that the blasphemous king, in his estate, shall honour *Mabuzzim*, gods-protectors, or saints-protectors; and a god whom his fathers knew not, shall he honour with gold and silver, and precious stones, and pleasant things. Is the same church that is guilty of this idolatry, notorious also for enjoining to her clergy, and engaging her nuns to enter

ter into vows of leading a single life? Doth she make a vain distinction of meats and commands, and institute certain times and days of fasting, wherein to touch flesh, is judged a mortal sin? Nothing can more fully accomplish the prediction of Daniel, (chap. xi. 33.), that the blasphemous king who shall worship *Mabuzzim*, shall also not regard the desire of wives: and the prediction of Paul, 1 Tim. iv. 3. that those who shall apostatize from the faith, by worshipping demons, shall no less distinguish themselves by forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving, of them who believe and know the truth. Doth the pope make himself equal, and even superior to God, in affecting titles, attributes, and honours; in assuming a power of dispensing with the immutable laws of nature and the gospel; in substituting for the commandments of God the traditions of men; treading upon the altar of God at his inauguration, and in making of the table of the Lord his footstool; and in that posture receiving the adoration of his cardinals? It is told by Daniel, (chap. vii. 25.), that the little horn should speak great words against the Most High, and think to change times and laws; and xi. 36. "The king shall do according to his will, and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and speak marvellous things against the God of gods:" and in like manner by St Paul, 2 Thess. ii. 3. 4. "The man of sin shall be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." Have the bishops of Rome extended their authority and jurisdiction over several countries and nations? Have they usurped a supremacy

macy over all other bishops ? Have they, partly by menaces, and partly by flatteries, obtained an entire ascendancy over Christian princes, so as to have them zealous members of their communion, blindly devoted to their interest, and ready, upon all occasions, to fight their battles ? It is nothing more than what was foretold by the prophets ; by Daniel, when he said, chap. vii. 2. that the little horn had a mouth speaking great things, and a look more stout than his fellows ; and by St John, when he said, chap. xiii. 7. “ that power was given to the beast over all kindreds, “ and tongues, and nations ; ” and xvii. 2. “ The “ kingdoms of the earth have committed forni- “ cation or idolatry, with the whore of Baby- “ lon ; ” and xviii. 23. “ have one mind, and “ shall give their power and strength unto the “ beast.” Hath the church of Rome enlarged the powers of her clergy, both regular and secular, giving them an almost absolute authority over the purses and consciences of men ; enriched them with sumptuous buildings, and noble endowments, and appropriated the choicest of the lands for the church-lands ? This was plainly intimated by Daniel, speaking of the blasphemous king, as the passage should be translated, chap. xi. 39. “ This shall he do to the defenders of “ *Mahuzzim*, together with the strange god, “ whom he shall acknowledge, he shall multiply “ honour, and he shall cause them to rule over “ many, and shall divide the land for gain.” Is the church of Rome distinguished above all other churches, by purple and scarlet colour ; by the richness and splendor of her vestments ; by the pomp and parade of her ceremonies, enticing and inveigling, with all artifices of ornament and ostentation, to join in her communion ? This was particularly specified by St John, speaking of the mystic whore of Babylon, or the corrupted church,

church, chap. xvii. 4. " And the woman was arrayed in scarlet-colour," &c. Have the bishops and clergy of Rome, in all ages, been remarkable for their policy? Have they not scrupled to promote their religion, by all manner of lies and pious frauds? Have they allowed of equivocation and mental reservation, in oaths and promises; and with the appearance of lambs in meekness and sanctity, acted like ravening wolves, with fury and violence? Daniel hath given the same character of the little horn, chap. vii. 8. " Behold in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things;" and Paul, of the apostates, 1 Tim. iv. 2. " Speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron;" and St John of the two-horned beast, chap. xiii. 11. " And I beheld another beast coming out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon." Doth the church of Rome boast of visions and revelations, and make a shew of miracles in attestations of her doctrines? Do her legends contain as many spurious and pretended wonders, as the scriptures do genuine and real? From St Paul, we learn, 2 Thess. ii. 9. 10. that the " coming of the man of sin, is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders; and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness;" and from St John, Rev. xiii. 13. 14. that " the false prophet doth great wonders in the sight of men, and deceiveth them who dwell on the earth, by the means of these miracles which he hath power to do." Doth the church of Rome require implicit obedience, and condemn all, who will not readily conform, as heretics, and excommunicate and exclude them from all the civil intercourse of life? So the false prophet, in John xvi. 17. " causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond,

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“ to receive a mark in their right hand or fore-
 “ head ; and that no man might buy or sell, save
 “ he that had the mark of the beast.” Have the
 Roman pontiffs occasioned the shedding of as
 much, and more Christian blood, than the Ro-
 man emperors themselves ? Have they all along
 maintained their spiritual sovereignty, by secret
 plots and inquisitions, open dragoonings and
 massacres, and imprisoned, and tortured and
 murdered the true worshippers of God, and the
 faithful servants of Jesus Christ ? This prediction
 of the prophets answers as well as the rest : for
 it is affirmed of the little horn, in Daniel vii. 21.
 25. that he shall make war with the saints,
 and shall prevail against them ; shall speak great
 words against the Most High, and shall wear out
 the saints of the Most High ; and the woman in
 the Revelation, Babylon the great, the mother of
 harlots, chap xvii. 6. is represented as “ drun-
 “ ken with the blood of the saints, and with the
 “ blood of the martyrs of Jesus ;” and xviii. 24.
 “ In her was found the blood of prophets, and
 “ of saints, and of all that were slain upon the
 “ earth.”

Besides these plain and direct prophecies, of
 the corruptions and innovations of the church of
 Rome, there are several secret glances at them ;
 several oblique intendments and intimations of
 them. “ Known unto God are all his works,
 “ from the beginning of the world,” Acts xv.
 18. ; and when the Holy Spirit dictated to the
 ancient prophets, the prophecies concerning
 Babylon, Tyre, and Egypt, and other tyranni-
 cal and corrupt governments, he dictated them
 in such a manner, as plainly evinces, that he
 had a farther view in this last and most tyranni-
 cal and corrupt government of all. Babylon,
 Tyre, and Egypt, are made the types and em-
 blems of Rome ; and many of the particulars
 predicted

predicted concerning the former, are more properly and truly applicable to the latter; several of them have been applied accordingly by St John. Jeremiah said, concerning ancient Babylon, chap. li 7. 45. "Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken; the nations have drunken of her wine, and therefore the nations are mad: my people go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his own soul, from the fierce anger of the Lord." But how much more applicable are the expressions, as St John hath applied them to mystic Babylon or Rome? Rev. xvii. 4. and xviii. 3. 4. "She hath a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations," &c. The prophets themselves might not understand this mystically, and saw, perhaps, no farther than the literal meaning; but they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, 2 Pet. i. 21. who comprehends all the events, the most remote, as well as the most immediate. But the intimations of Popery, which I particularly meant, are more frequent, and more obvious, in the New Testament. Why was our blessed Saviour so very cautious in giving honour to the virgin Mary, that he seemed to regard her less than the least of his disciples? Matth. xii. 48. "Who is my mother?" John ii. 4. "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" Luke xi. 27. 28. "Blessed is the womb that bare thee; yea, rather blessed are they who hear the word of God, and keep it." Why did he rebuke Peter more severely than any other of the apostles, Matth. xvi. 23. "Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offence unto me; for thou favourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men:" and especially, after giving him that high encomium, vers. 18. "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church?"

May we not reasonably presume, that he spoke and acted thus, as foreseeing that divine worship would idolatrously be paid to the one, that supremacy which would be tyrannically arrogated to the other, and which that very encomium would impertinently be brought to countenance? How came it to pass, that our Saviour, instituting his holy supper, said of the bread, only, "Take, eat," but of the cup, more particularly, "Drink ye all of it?" May we not probably suppose, that it was designed to prevent or obviate their sacrilege, who would have all indeed eat of the bread, but priests only to drink of the cup? Wherefore, the vices of the scribes and Pharisees, left so particularly upon record, if not chiefly for the correction and reproof of their natural issue and descendants, the clergy of the church of Rome? Read the whole 23d chapter of Matthew, and you will find there is not a single woe denounced against the former, but as properly belongs, and is as strictly applicable to the later; binding heavy burdens, &c. doing all their works to be seen of men, devouring widows houses, and for a pretence, making long prayers; compassing sea and land to make a proselyte, and when he is made, making him twofold more the child of hell than themselves; making useless and frivolous distinctions of oaths; observing positive duties, and omitting the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith; making clean the outside, but within being full of extortion and excess; outwardly appearing righteous unto men, but within being full of hypocrisy and iniquity; building the tombs of the prophets, and garnishing the sepulchres of the righteous; honouring the dead saints, and at the same time persecuting the living; are as strong marks and characters of the one sect, as they were of the other. Do not forbidding im-

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plicit faith and obedience to men, Matth. xxiii.
 9. " Call no man your father upon earth, for
 " one is your Father who is in heaven ;" forbid-
 ding the worshipping of angels, Col. ii. 18. " Let
 " no man beguile you of your reward, in volunta-
 " ry humility, and worshipping of angels ;" for-
 bidding all pretences to works of merit and super-
 erogation, Luke xvii. 10. " And when you shall
 " have done all things which are commanded
 " you, say, We are unprofitable servants, we have
 " done that which was our duty to do ;" forbid-
 ding the clergy to lord over God's heritage,
 1 Pet. iv. 3. " Neither as being lords over God's
 " heritage, but being ensamples to the flock ;"
 forbidding the service of God in an unknown
 tongue, as St Paul hath done at large, in the
 14th chapter of the first epistle to the Corin-
 thians : do not all these, and such prohibitions, I
 say, necessarily suppose and imply, that one time
 or other these particular errors and abuses would
 creep into the church ? and, in what church they
 are publicly taught and practised, no man can be
 insensible. Such texts of scripture, are as much
 predictions that these things would be, as they
 are arguments that they should not be : for laws,
 divine and human, are not levelled against chi-
 merical and mere imaginary vices, such as never
 are, never will be brought into practice ; but are
 enacted by reason of those enormities, which
 men either have committed, or are likely to com-
 mit, and which the lawgivers, wisely foreseeing,
 are therefore willing to prevent. Why doth St
 Paul admonish the Romans, particularly, to be
 ware of apostacy ? Rom. xi. 20. 22. " Be not
 " high-minded, but fear, otherwise thou shalt
 " be cut off." Surely this is a strange way of ad-
 dressing the Romans, if the church of Rome was
 designed to be the infallible judge of controver-
 sies, the centre of unity, and director of all re-
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ligion. View the picture that Peter and Jude have drawn of false teachers, and consider whom it most resembles in all its features, 2 Pet. ii. 1. " But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you; who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them; and many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom, the way of truth shall be evil spoken of; and through covetousness shall they, with feigned words, make merchandise of you," &c. Jude 4. " Ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ: these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities: these be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the spirit," &c. What St Paul hath predicted concerning the corruption of the last days, is too much the character of all Christians, but the application more properly belongs to the members of the church of Rome, 2 Tim. iii. 1. " This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." Such are the direct prophecies, and such the general intimations of Popery; and we have the better right to make this application of the general intimations, as the direct prophecies are so plain and particular.

It is not only foretold, that such a power, as that of the pope and church of Rome, shall be exercised in the Christian world; but, to prevent any

any mistake in the application of these prophecies; the place and the persons are likewise pointed out, where and by whom it should be exercised. The prophet Daniel, chap. vii. hath described four beasts, or four kingdoms; and out of the fourth beast, or kingdom, he saith, shall arise ten horns, or ten kings or kingdoms; and among, or after them, shall come up another little horn, and he shall be diverse from the rest; and he shall have eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things, and a look more stout than his fellows; and he shall subdue, and pluck up by the roots, three of the first horns or kings; and shall speak great words against the Most High, and think to change times and laws. Daniel's first kingdom is the Babylonian; the second, the Persian; the third, is the Macedonian, or Grecian; and the fourth, can be none other than the Roman; and the Roman empire, upon its dissolution, was divided into ten kings or kingdoms. It is in the western or Latin empire, that these ten kings, or kingdoms, are to be sought and found; for this was properly the body of the fourth beast; the Greek, or eastern empire, belonged to the body of the third beast: and out the western Roman empire, by the incursions of the northern nations, arose ten kings or kingdoms. Now, who is the little horn that was to spring up among these, or after these? who, as a politico-ecclesiastical power, differeth from the other ten powers; who hath eyes like the eyes of a man, that is, he is a seer, as Sir Isaac Newton says, or bishop, in the literal sense of the word; who hath a mouth speaking great things, bulls and anathemas, interdicts and excommunications; who hath a look more stout than his fellows, assuming a superiority, not only over other bishops, but even a superiority over kings and emperors themselves; who hath plucked up
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by the roots three of the first horns, the exarchate of Ravenna, the kingdom of the Lombards, and the state of Rome; and is distinguished by the triple crown; who speaketh great words against the Most High, and setting up himself above all laws, human and divine; who weareth out the saints of the Most High, by wars and massacres, inquisitions and persecutions; who changeth times and laws, instituting new religions, teaching, for doctrines, the commandments of men: are questions which, I think, cannot admit of much dispute; there is only one person in the world can fully answer all these characters.

The blasphemous king, mentioned in Daniel, vers. 36.—39 who shall do according to his will, &c. is indeed a more general character, comprehending the tyrannical and corrupt power of the eastern church, as well as the western. But when we consider how much, and how far the Latin hath prevailed above the Greek church; how the supremacy, which was first claimed by the patriarch of Constantinople, hath been fully established in the bishop of Rome; how much more absolute the will of the Roman pontiff hath been, than that of the Brigantine emperor; how the pope hath exalted, and magnified himself as a God upon earth; how much more the Latins have degenerated from the religion of their fathers, than the Greeks; how the desire of single life, and the worship of the dead, which first began in the eastern parts, have been carried to the greatest height in the western empire; how much the jurisdiction and authority, the lands and revenues, of the Roman clergy, have exceeded those of the Greeks; how, while the Greek church hath lain oppressed for several centuries, the Roman hath still prospered, and, in all probability, may still prosper, till God's indignation against the Jews be accomplished; in short, when

we consider how entirely this character agrees with that of the little horn; and how much better it agrees with the head of the Roman, than with the head of the Greek church, the particular application of it to the bishop of Rome, may well be justified; especially, since St Paul himself hath applied it in the same manner.

St Paul hath drawn the man of sin, the son of perdition, 2 Theff. ii. an exact copy and resemblance of the little horn, and the blasphemous king, in Daniel: and this man of sin must necessarily be a Christian, and not a heathen or infidel power; because he is represented as God, sitting in the temple of God. He is described too as the head of the apostacy, or the falling away from the faith; and this apostacy is afterwards defined, by Paul, to consist in worshipping demons, angels, and departed saints; and no man, surely, can have any reason to doubt, who is the head and leader of this apostacy, the patron, and authoriser of this worship. The apostle had communicated to the Thessalonians, what it was that hindered his appearance, vers. 5.—6. “Remember ye not, that when I was yet with you, I told you these things? and now ye know what withholdeth, that he might be revealed in his time.” What this was, the apostle hath no where expressly informed us; but if tradition may be depended on in any case, it may certainly in this: for it is the constant and concurrent tradition of the fathers, that what withholdeth is the Roman empire; and therefore the primitive Christians, in the public offices of the church, prayed for its peace and welfare; as knowing, that when the Roman empire should be broke in pieces, the empire of the man of sin would be raised on its ruins. They made no question, they were fully persuaded, that the successor to the Roman emperor, in Rome, would be the man of sin: and
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who hath succeeded to the Roman emperor in Rome, let the world judge and determine.

The Apostle John too hath copied after Daniel; and, chap. xiii. exhibits the Roman empire under the same emblem of a beast with ten horns. It is evident, that he designed the same as Daniel's fourth beast; because he represents him, as a composition of the three former, with the body of a leopard, the feet of a bear, and the mouth of a lion. He describes him, too, with the properties and qualities of the little horn, and speaking the same blasphemies, acting the same cruelties: and having plainly seen what power is intended by the one, we have the less reason to hesitate about the other. But to distinguish him yet more, the number of his name is defined to be 666; which, as was observed, is contained in two words, the one Latin, the other Hebrew, both signifying almost the same thing. The seven heads of the beast, are likewise explained to be the seven mountains on which the woman sitteth; which all the world knows to be the situation of Rome. The woman herself is also declared to be, that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth; and that can be no other than Rome. Indeed the Papists themselves allow (for they cannot but allow) all this to be said of Rome; but then they argue and maintain it, to be said of Heathen Rome. But that cannot possibly be, because it agrees not with several circumstances of the prophecy; and particularly, with the woman's sitting on the beast with ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns; which must certainly typify the Roman empire after it was divided into ten kingdoms; but the Roman empire was not divided into ten kingdoms, till after it became Christian. The apostle, with the eyes of prophecy, saw the beast rise up out of the sea; and the angel, in his explication, says, that he shall ascend out of the bottomless

bottomless pit; but Heathen Rome had risen and flourished many years before this time. This beast cannot represent Heathen Rome, because he is successor to it, to the great red dragon, in his power, and his seat, and great authority. This beast was to continue, and prosper, forty and two prophetic months, that is, 1260 years; but Heathen Rome did not continue 400 years after this time. The woman is represented as the mother of idolatry, with her golden cup, intoxicating the inhabitants of the earth; but Heathen Rome ruled more with a rod of iron, and was rather an importer of foreign gods and superstitions, than an exporter to other nations.

John wondered, with great admiration, when he saw the woman drunken with the blood of saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus; but wherefore should he, who had seen and suffered the persecution under Nero, wonder so much, that Heathens should persecute Christians; but that Christians should delight in shedding the blood of Christians, was indeed, of all wonders the greatest. The woman rideth upon the beast under his seventh head, or last form of government; but the sixth head, or imperial form of government, was said to be existing in John's time; the sixth was not destroyed, and the seventh, or last form, did not take place, till after Rome was become Christian. The ten horns, with one mind, give their power to the beast, and afterward hate the whore, and make her desolate, and burn her with fire; but never did any ten kings, unanimously and voluntarily, submit to Heathen Rome, and afterwards burn her with fire. Rome, according to the prophecies, is to be utterly burnt with fire, and to be made a desolation for ever and ever; but Rome hath never yet undergone this fate, and consequently Heathen Rome cannot be the subject of these prophecies. In short, from all these, and o-
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ther characters and circumstances, some whereof can never agree with Heathen Rome, and all agree perfectly with Christian Rome; it may, and must be concluded, that not Heathen but Christian, not imperial but papal Rome was intended in the vision.

Beside the place and persons, the time also is signified, of this tyrannical power, when it should prevail, and how long it should prevail. Daniel mentions these things at a very great distance, and indeed they were so in his time. It is said, chap. viii. 26. and x. 14. "the vision is yet for many days;" that it comprehends, (viii. 19. xi. 35. 49. xii. 4. 9.) "even to the time of the end;" that when God (xii. 7.) shall have accomplished, to scatter the power of the holy people, "all these things shall be finished:" all which, and other passages to the same purpose, considered, it appears as unaccountable as strange, that ever any men should imagine, as some both ancients and moderns have done, that Daniel's prophecies reached not beyond the times of Antiochus Epiphanes. The fourth and last is represented as the greatest of all, both in extent and in duration: it devoureth, treadeth it down, and breaketh it in pieces. After which, it is divided into ten kingdoms; and the little horn groweth not up, till after this division. So that this tyrannical power was to arise in the latter days of the Roman empire, after it should be divided into ten kingdoms. From St Paul too we may collect, that the great power of the Roman empire hindered the appearing of the man of sin; but of this enough."

The bishop next proceeds to fix the time of the beast's rise and continuance; which is exceeding specious, and may perhaps be true, though it is very different from that which we have given in our essay: however, as many eminently great
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and learned men have already failed in this point, it need not be thought strange, if we have failed too. As we have by no means been dogmatical, in our opinion, on these intricate points, we leave our readers at full liberty to apply the calculations, as they shall see most consistent with the sacred text.

“ It appears then, says the bishop, that this Antichristian power was to rise in the latter times of the Roman empire, after an end should be put to the imperial power, and after the empire should be divided into ten kingdoms : and it is not only told when it should prevail, but moreover, how long it should prevail. Here we cannot but observe, that the very same period of time is prefixed for its continuance, both by Daniel and by St John. Wonderful is the consent and harmony between these inspired writers, as in other circumstances of the prophecy, so particularly in this. In Dan. vii. 25. the little horn was to wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws ; and it is said expressly, that they shall be given into his hand, until a time, and times, and the dividing of time ; or, the same thing is expressed in another place, (chap. xii. 7.) “ for a time, times, and a half.” In the Revelation it is said of the beast, chap. xiii. 7. “ to whom it was given, in like manner, to make war with the saints, and to overcome them ;” that power also was given him, to continue 42 months ; the witnesses also were to prophecy 1260 days, clothed in sackcloth. And the woman, the true church of Christ, who fled into the wilderness from persecution, chap. xii. 6. 14. should be fed and nourished there 1260 days ; or, as it is otherwise expressed in the same chapter, “ for a time, and times, and half a time.” Now all these numbers you will find, upon computation, to be the

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same, and each of them to signify 1260 years : for a time is a year, times two years, and dividing of time half a year, altogether three years and a half ; that is, equal to 42 months, and and these again equal to 1260 days ; and 1260 days, in prophetic stile, are 1260 years. From all these dates and characters, it may fairly be concluded, that the time of the church's great affliction, and of the reign of Antichrist, will be a period of 1260 years.

To fix the time, exactly, when these 1260 years began, and consequently when they will end, is a matter of some niceness and difficulty ; and perhaps we may see the conclusion, before we can precisely ascertain their beginning. However, it appears to be a very great mistake, of some very learned men, in dating the commencement of this period too early : This is the chief error of Mr Mede's scheme ; what hath led him, and others, who have followed his example, into subsequent errors, and what the event hath plainly refuted. For, if the reign of Antichrist had begun, as he reckons, about the year 456, its end would have fallen out about the year 1716. The truth is, the 1260 years are not to be reckoned from the beginning of these corruptions, from the rise of this tyranny ; for the mystery of iniquity began to work, even in the days of the apostles ; but from their full growth, and establishment in the world. Of the little horn, which was to wear out the saints of the Most High, and to change times and laws, it is said, they shall be given into his hand ; which can imply no less, than the most absolute power and authority over them, until a time, and times, and the dividing of time. In like manner, the holy city, the true church of Christ, was to be trode under foot, which is the lowest state of subjection : the two witnesses were not only to prophecy, but to prophecy

phesy in sackcloth ; that is, in mourning and affliction : the woman, the church, was to abide in the wilderness ; that is, in a forlorn and desolate condition : and power was given to the beast, not merely to continue, as it is translated, but to practise and prosper, and to do according to his will ; and all for the same period of 1260 years. These 1260 years, therefore, of the reign of Antichrist, are not to be computed from his birth, or infancy, or youth ; but from his coming to maturity, from his coming to the throne : and, in my opinion, says the Rev. Bishop, their beginning cannot be fixed, consistent with the truth of history, either sooner or later than the eighth century. In the year 727, the pope and people of Rome revolted from the exarch of Ravenna, and shook off their allegiance to the Greek emperor. In the year 755, the pope obtained the exarchate of Ravenna for himself, and thence afterwards acted as an absolute temporal prince. In the year 774, the pope, by the assistance of Charles the great, became possessed of the kingdom of the Lombards. In the year 787, the worship of images was fully established, and the supremacy of the pope acknowledged, by the second council of Nice. From one or other of these transactions, it is probable, that the beginning of the reign of Antichrist it to be dated. What appears to be most probable is, that it is to be dated from 727 ; when, as Sigonius says, Rome, and the Roman dukedom, came from the Greeks to the Roman pontiff. Hereby he became, in some measure, a horn, or temporal prince ; though his power was not fully established, till some years afterwards : and, before he was a horn at all, he could not answer the character of the little horn. If then, the beginning of the 1260 years of the reign of Antichrist, is to be dated from the year 727, their end will fall out in the year 1987 ;

that is, 13 years before the year 2000 from Christ, and near the 6000 year of the world : according to a very early tradition of Jews and Christians, and even of Heathens, great changes and revolutions are expected, both in the natural and moral world ; and there remaineth, according to the words of the apostle, Heb. iv. 9. a sabbatism, or holy rest, for the people of God.

What Daniel hath described, under the character of the little horn, and the blasphemous king ; what Paul hath described, under the character of the man of sin, the son of perdition ; and John, under the character of the beast and false prophet ; that same tyrannical, idolatrous, and blasphemous power, ecclesiastical writers usually denominate Antichrist : and having thus far traced his character and description, his rise, progress, and continuance, let us now proceed to consider his fall ; when, at the expiration of the fixed period of 1260 years, his kingdom shall be destroyed for evermore. The prophets are not more expressive of his elevation, than they are of his destruction. They not only predict his downfall, in general

terms, but also describe the manner and circumstances of it ; and St John's account being larger, and more circumstantial and particular, will be the best comment and explication of the others. For my part, I cannot pretend to prophecy, which is the common vanity of expositors of the Revelation ; I can only represent events, wherein, according to my apprehension, the prophets have placed them. Sobriety and modesty are required in the interpretation of all prophecies, and especially of things yet future. Only, thus much it may be proper to premise, that having seen so many of the prophecies fulfilled, you have the less to doubt of the completion of those which are to follow.

“ At this present time, says bishop Newton,
we

we are living under the sixth trumpet, (but, say we, under the fourth vial) and the second woe, Rev. xi. ; the Othman empire is still subsisting, the beast is still reigning, and there are Protestant witnesses still prophesying in sackcloth : and this sixth trumpet and second woe must end, before the seventh trumpet can sound, or the third woe be poured out, which is to fall upon the kingdom of the beast. But before the end of the second woe, it should seem, that the Papists will make a great and successful effort against the Protestant religion. When the witnesses shall have near finished their testimony, that is, towards the conclusion of the 1260 years, the beast shall make war with them, and shall overcome them. They shall be oppressed, and dead, as it were, to the great joy and triumph of their enemies ; but they shall rise again, after three years and a half, and the Protestant religion will be more glorious than ever ; with a considerable diminution of the papal authority." This, we have shewn, has already happened, about the time of the reformation. But, says the bishop, " according to the method and order wherein St John hath arranged these events, they must happen before the end of the second woe, or the fall of the Othman empire. Ezekiel, chap. xxxviii. xxxix. and Daniel, chap. xi. 44. 45. have given some intimations, that the Othman empire shall be overthrown, in opposing the settlement of Israel in their own land, in the latter days. In the conclusion of the book of Daniel, there are some intimations, that the religion of Mahomet shall prevail, in the east, for as long a period of time as the tyranny of the little horn in the west. Very remarkable too, it is, that Mahomed first contrived his imposture in the year 606, the very same year wherein the tyrant Phocas made a grant of the supremacy to the pope ; and this might incline one to think, that the

1260 years of the reign of Antichrist are to be to be dated from this time: but though they might rise together, yet they were not fully established together. The authority of Mahomed might be fully settled in the seventh century, but that of the pope was not so, till the eighth century; and therefore, as the one was established somewhat sooner, so it may be also subverted somewhat sooner than the other. The pope, indeed, was established supreme in spirituals, in the seventh century, but he became not a temporal power, horn, or beast, till the the eighth century.

When the Othman empire is overthrown, and the second woe is past, then, according to St John, Rev. xi. 14. the third woe cometh quickly, which comprehends all the severe and terrible judgments of God upon the kingdom of the beast. In like manner, when Daniel hath predicted the fall of the king of the north, or of the Othman empire, he subjoins immediately, chap. xii. 1. that there shall be a time of trouble, such as there never was since there were a nation, even to that same time; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book; agreeable to which, St John also saith, Rev. xx. 15. "That whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire." The 1260 years of the reign of the beast, I suppose, end with the 1260 years of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth; and now the destined time, for the judgments of God to overtake him; for, as he might exist before the 1260 years began, so he may exist likewise after they are finished, in order to be made an eminent example of the divine justice. For the greater confirmation and illustration of this subject, and to make the stronger impression on the minds of the readers, these judgments

are displayed under variety of figures and representations. First, they are described in a more general manner," &c. : but of this we have treated largely in the essay.

In 405, &c. the Rev. Bishop, from various places of holy writ, proves the return of the Jews into their own land ; but we have also taken notice of this formerly, and therefore shall not weary our readers with a repetition of almost the same things. From page 408, the bishop proceeds to describe the millennium, which we supposed to begin at the reformation, and still to be running on till the consummation of all things ; but which he thinks will only commence about the year of the world 6000, and continue 1000 years ; which will be a thousand years for every day of the creation, and the last thousand for the sabbath or seventh day, when Satan is to be bound, and the martyrs to rise, and live on the earth till the end. This we shall not pretend to affirm or deny, as it is foreign to our design, which was only to trace out Antichrist ; and it is, perhaps, too difficult to be fully ascertained till the events discover it.

Before we conclude this Appendix, we beg the indulgence of our readers, for the sake of those who may not have had an opportunity of perusing Bishop Newton's very learned and elegant performance. " From these instances, says he, which we have produced of prophecies, and their completions, it is hoped this conclusion may be fairly drawn, in the words of the apostle Peter, 2 Pet. i. 20. 21. " that no prophecy of the scripture, is of any private interpretation, or the suggestion of any man's spirit or fancy ; for the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were inspired by the Holy Ghost." Other instances might have been alledged to the same purpose ; but these prophecies

prophecies which recived their full accomplishment in ancient times, and even these which were accomplished in the person and actions of our blessed Saviour, are not here considered; such only as relate to these latter ages, and either now, or in part, are fulfilling in the world, are made the subjects of these dissertations. This is proving our religion, in some measure, by ocular demonstration; is not walking by faith only, but also by sight. For you can have no reason to doubt of the truth of prophecy, and consequently of the truth of revelation; when you see instances of things, which could no way depend upon human conjecture, foretold with the greatest clearness, and fulfilled, hundreds of years afterwards, with the greatest exactness. Nay you see the prophecies, the latest whereof were delivered above 1700 years ago, and some of them above 3000 years ago, fulfilling at this very time; and cities, countries, and kingdoms, in the very same condition, and all brought about in the very same manner; and with the very same circumstances, as the prophets had foretold.

You see the descendants of Shem, and Japheth, ruling and enlarged in Asia, and in Europe, and, perhaps, in America; and the curse of servitude still attending the descendants of Ham, in Africa. You see the posterity of Ishmael multiplied exceedingly, and become a great nation, in the Arabians; yet living like wild men, and shifting from place to place in the wilderness; their hand against every man, and every man's hand against them; and still dwelling an independant and free people, in the presence of all their brethren, and in the presence of all their enemies.

You see the family of Esau totally extinct, and that of Jacob subsisting at this day; the sceptre departed from Judah, and the people living nowhere in authority, every where in subjection; the Jews still dwelling alone among the nations,

whilst

whilst the remembrance of Amalek is utterly put
 out from under heaven. You see the Jews se-
 verely punished for their infidelity, and disobedi-
 ence to their great prophet, like unto Moses;
 plucked from off their own land, and removed in-
 to all the kingdoms of the earth; oppressed and
 spoiled evermore, and made a proverb, and a
 bye-word, among all nations. You see Ephraim
 so broken, as to be no more a people, while the
 whole nation is comprehended under the name
 of Judah; the Jews, wonderfully preserved as a
 distinct people, while their great conquerors are
 every where destroyed; their land lying desolate,
 and themselves cut off from being the people of
 God, while the Gentiles are advanced in their room.
 You see Nineveh so completely destroyed, that
 the place thereof is not, and cannot be known;
 Babylon made a desolation for ever, a possession
 for the bittern, and pools of water; Tyre become
 like the top of a rock, a place for fishers to spread
 their nets upon; and Egypt, a base kingdom, the
 basest of the kingdoms, and still tributary, and
 subject to strangers. You see the four great em-
 pires of the world, the three former of which, are,
 long ago, utterly destroyed; and the fourth, and
 last, which was greater, and more powerful than
 any of the former, divided, in the western part
 thereof, into ten lesser; and among them a power
 with a triple crown, diverse from the first, with
 a mouth speaking very great things; and with a
 look more stout than that of his fellows, speaking
 great words against the Most High, wearing out
 the saints of the Most High, and changing times
 and laws. You see a power casting down the
 truth to the ground, and prosper, and practise,
 and destroy the holy people, not regarding the
 God of his fathers, nor the desire of wives; but
 honouring Mahuzzim, gods protectors, or saints
 protectors, and causing the priests of Mahuzzim
 to

to rule over many, and to divide the land for gain. You see the Turks stretching forth their hands over the countries, and particularly over the land of Egypt, the Lybians at their steps, and the Arabians still escaping out of their hand. You see the Jews led away captive into all nations, and Jerusalem trodden down of the Gentiles, and likely to continue so, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled; as the Jews are, by a constant miracle, preserved a distinct people, for the completion of the prophecies relating to them. You see one who opposeth, and exalteth himself above all laws, human and divine, sitting as God in the church of God, and shewing, himself, that he is God; whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness. You see a great apostacy in the Christian church; which consists, chiefly, in the worship of demons, angels, or departed saints; and is promoted through the hypoerisy of liars, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats. You see the seven churches of Asia, lying in the same forlorn and desolate condition, that the angel had signified to John; their candlestick removed out of its place; their churches turned into mosques; their worship into superstition. In short, you see the characters of the beast, and the false prophet, and the whore of Babylon, now exemplified in every particular, and in a city that is seated on seven mountains; so that if the bishop of Rome had sat for his picture, a greater resemblance, and likeness, could not have been drawn.

As there is a near affinity between this and what Dr Clark hath said, in the conclusion of his discourse of prophecies, it may be proper to confirm and illustrate the argument with so great an authority: and indeed these things are of such importance

importance, and so deserving to be known, that they cannot be inculcated too frequently, nor shewn in too many lights.

“ I shall conclude this head, says the Doctor, with pointing at some particular, extraordinary prophecies, which deserve to be carefully considered, and compared with the events; whether they could possibly have proceeded from chance, or from enthusiasm. Some of them are of such a nature, as they can only be judged of by persons learned in history; and these I shall but just mention. Others are obvious, to the consideration of the whole world; and with those I shall finish what I think proper, at this time, to offer upon the subject.”

Concerning Babylon, it was particularly foretold, that it should be shut up and besieged by the Medes, Elamites, and Armenians; that the river should be dried up; that the city should be taken, in the time of a feast, while her mighty men were drunken; which accordingly came to pass, when Belsazzar, and all his thousand princes, who were drunk with him at the feast, were slain by Cyrus's soldiers. Also it was particularly foretold, that God would make the country of Babylon a possession for the bittern, and pools of water. Which was accordingly fulfilled, by the overflowing and drowning of it, on the breaking down of the great dam in order to take the city. Could the correspondence of these events, with the predictions, be the result of chance? but suppose these predictions were forged after the event, can the following ones also, have been written after the event? or, with any reason, be ascribed to chance?

“ The wild beasts of the desert shall dwell there, and the owls shall dwell therein; and it shall be no more inhabited for ever, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: As God overthrew

threw Sodom and Gomorrah, &c. They shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, but thou shalt be desolate for ever, saith the Lord :—Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without inhabitant : It shall sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her.”

Concerning Egypt, was the following prediction forged after the event ? or can it, with any reason, be ascribed to chance ? Egypt shall be a base kingdom : it shall be the basest of kingdoms, neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations : “ For I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations.”

Concerning Tyre, the prediction is no less remarkable. “ I will make thee like the top of a rock ; thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon ; thou shalt be built no more ; Thou shalt be no more ; the merchants among the people shall hiss at thee ; thou shalt be a terror, and shalt never be any more. All they that know thee among the people, shall be astonished at thee.”

The description of the extent of the dominion of that people, who were to possess Judea in the latter days ; was it forged after the event ? or can it reasonably be ascribed to chance ? “ He shall come with horsemen, and with many ships, and shall overflow and pass over : He shall enter also into the glorious land, (and shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas, in the glorious holy mountain), and many countries shall be overthrown : But these shall escape out of his hand ; even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape ; but he shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and
over

over all the precious things of Egypt; and the Lybians and Ethiopians shall be at his steps."

When Daniel foretels a tyrannical power, which should wear out the saints of the Most High, and they shall be given into his hands, until a time, and times, and the dividing of time; and again, for time, times, and an half: (which can be no way applied to the short persecution of Antiochus, because these prophecies are expressly declared to be for many days); "concerning what shall befall thy people in the latter days; for yet the vision is for many days; concerning the time of the end: what shall be in the last end of the indignation; concerning those that shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days; to try them, even to the time of the end; because it is yet for a time appointed; concerning a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation; the time when God shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people; the time of the end, till which the words are closed up and sealed; to which, the prophet is commanded to shut up his words, and seal the book, for many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased; even the end, till which Daniel was to rest, and then stand in his lot at the end of the days." When Daniel, I say, foretels such a tyrannical power, to continue such a determined period of time: and John prophesies, that the Gentiles shall tread the holy city under foot forty and two months; which is exactly the same period of time with that of Daniel: and again, that two witnesses, clothed in sackcloth, should prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days; which is again the very same period of time: and again, that the woman, which fled into the wilderness from persecution, should continue there a thousand two hundred, and threescore days: and

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again,

again, that she should flee into the wilderness for a time, and times, and half a time; which is still the very same period: and again, that a wild beast, a tyrannical power, to whom it was given to make war with the saints, and to overcome them, was to continue forty and two months, (still the same period of time), and to have power over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations, so that all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him? Is it credible, or possible, that ignorant or enthusiastical writers should, by mere chance, hit upon such coincidences of occult numbers? especially, since St John could not possibly take the numbers from Daniel, if he understood Daniel to mean nothing more than the short persecution of Antiochus. And if he understood Daniel to mean a much longer, and greater, and a more remote tyranny, which John himself prophesied of as, in his time, still future; then the wonder is infinitely greater, and in those early times, when there was not the least footstep in the world of any such power, as St John distinctly describes, (but which now is very conspicuous, as I shall presently observe more particularly), it should enter into the heart of man, to conceive so much as the possibility of such a power, sitting not upon the pavilion of the Heathen persecutors, but expressly in the temple, and upon the seat of God himself.

But these prophecies, which either relate to particular places, or depend upon the computation of particular periods of time, are (as I said) of such a nature, as that they cannot be judged of but by persons skilled in history. There are some others more general, running through the whole scripture, and obvious to the consideration of the whole world.

For instance; it was foretold by Moses, that when the Jews forsook the true God, they should be

be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth; should be scattered among the Heathen, among the nations, among all people, from the one end of the earth even to the other; should there be left, few in number, among the Heathen, and pine away in their iniquity, in their enemies lands, and should become an astonishment, a proverb, and a bye-word among the nations; and that amongst these nations they should find no ease, neither should the sole of their foot have rest; but the Lord should give them a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind, and send a faintness into their hearts, in the lands of their enemies, so that the sound of a shaken leaf should chase them. Had any thing like this in Moses's time, ever happened to any nation? Or was there, in nature, any probability, that any such thing should ever happen to any people? that when they were conquered by their enemies, and led into captivity, they should neither continue in the place of their captivity, nor be swallowed up and lost among their conquerors, but be scattered among all the nations of the world, and hated by all nations, for many ages, and yet continue a people? Or, could any description of the Jews, written at this day, possibly, be a more exact and lively picture, of the state they have now been in for many ages, than this prophetic description, given by Moses, more than 3000 years ago?

The very same thing is, in like manner, continually predicted through all the following prophets; "that God would scatter them among the Heathen; that he would cause them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth; that he would scatter them into all the winds; and that they should abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod,

and without a teraphim." And here, concerning the predictions of Ezekiel, it is remarkable, in particular, that they being spoken of in the very time of the Babylonian captivity, it is therefore evident, from the time of his prophesying, as well as from the nature and description of the thing itself, that he must needs be understood of that latter captivity, into all places, which was to happen after the fulfilling of the time of that age, wherein God was first to bring them again (out of the Babylonian captivity) into the land where they should build a temple ; but not like to that which afterwards (after their final return) should be built for ever, with a glorious building. The fore-cited prophecies, I say, must of necessity be understood of that wide and long dispersion, which, in the New Testament also, is expressly mentioned by our Saviour, and his apostle Paul.

It is also farther, both largely and distinctly predicted, as well by Moses himself, as by all the following prophets, That, notwithstanding of this unexampled dispersion of God's people, yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, God will not destroy them utterly : but when they shall call to mind, among all the nations whither God has driven them, and shall return unto the Lord, he will turn their captivity, and gather them from all nations, from the utmost parts of heaven, even in the latter days. That though he makes a full end of all other nations, yet he will not make a full end of them ; but a remnant of them shall be preserved, and return out of all countries whither God has driven them : That the Lord shall set his hand again, the second time, to recover the remnant of his people ; and shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth, &c. And that these prophecies

prophecies might not be applied to the return from the seventy years captivity in Babylon, (which, moreover, was not a dispersion into all nations) they are expressly referred to the latter days, not only by Moses, but by Hosea, who lived long after; "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice; afterward, they shall return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days:" and by Ezekiel, who lived in the captivity itself; "After many days, (speaking of those who should oppose the return of the Israelites), thou shalt be visited in the latter years, thou shalt come into the land;—Upon the people that are gathered out of the nations;—in that day, when my people of Israel dwelleth safely;—thou shalt come up against them;—it shall be in the latter days." These predictions, therefore, necessarily belong to that age, when the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled, and the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And that through all the changes which have happened in the kingdoms of the earth, from the days of Moses to the present time, which is more than 3000 years, nothing should have happened to prevent the possibility of the accomplishment of these prophecies; but, on the contrary, the state of the Jewish and Christian nations, at this day, should be such as renders them easily capable, not only of a figurative, but even of a literal completion, in every particular, if the will of God be so; this, I say, is a miracle, which hath nothing parallel to it in the phenomena of nature.

Another instance, no less extraordinary, is as follows: Daniel foretels a kingdom upon the earth, "which shall be divers from all kingdoms, divers from all that were before it, exceeding

dreadful, and shall devour the whole earth: That, among the powers into which this kingdom shall be divided, there shall arise one power divers from the rest, who shall subdue unto himself three of the first powers, and he shall have a mouth speaking great things, and a look more stout than his fellows. He shall make war with the saints, and shall prevail against them, &c. He shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods; neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god, for he shall magnify himself above all. And in his estate shall he honour the god of forces, or, as in the margin of the Bible, *gods-protectors*, or *saints protectors*, and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour. Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge, and increase with glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain." Suppose now all this to be spoken by Daniel, of nothing more than the short persecution under Antiochus Epiphanes; which, that it cannot be I have shewn above. But suppose that it were, and that it was all forged after the event: yet this cannot be the case of St Paul, and St John, who describe exactly a like power, and in like words, speaking of things to come in the latter days, of things still future in their time, and of which there were then no footsteps, no appearance in the world. "The day of Christ, saith St Paul, shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition," &c. Again, the Spirit speaketh expressly, "That, in the latter times, some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils;—forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats,"

meats," &c. In like manner, John prophesies of a wild beast, or tyrannical power, to whom was given great authority, and a mouth speaking great things, and blasphemies, &c. All the following citations we have formerly, once and again, applied to Antichrist, and shall not repeat them here. "But, says the Doctor, if, in the days of Paul and John, there was any footsteps of such a sort of power as this in the world; or, if there ever had been any such power in the world; or, if there was any appearance of probability, that could make it enter into the heart of man to imagine, that there ever could be any such power in the world, much less in the temple, or church of God; and, if there be not now such a power actually, and conspicuously, exercised in the world; and if any picture of this power, drawn after the event, can now describe it more plainly and exactly, than it was described originally, in the words of the prophecy: then may it, with some degree of plausibleness, be suggested, that the prophecies are nothing more than enthusiastic imaginations." Thus far Dr Clark: to whose very pertinent observations, we shall add another, which we hope will confirm and strengthen the above, and what follows. It has been already observed, that the Jews are still, and have been, a distinct people, unmixed with any other nation, though living among them; that they have, in their custody, the writings of the Old Testament, to which they strictly adhere, and which they have, all along, openly owned and acknowledged to be of divine inspiration; and, unless it can be supposed, that these Jews, dispersed over the whole world, should have entered into a confederacy with Christians, to new-model, or alter, all, or any part, of these sacred writings; which every man, in his senses,

will

will reject with abhorrence; especially, considering the hatred they bear to Christians there can be no possibility of such a collusion. Therefore, whatever prophecies are contained in the sacred writings, either of the Old or New Testament, must undoubtedly be genuine and authentic; and no possibility can be supposed, of any prophecy being invented, or forged after the events are past. We are verily persuaded there could be no such a being, in Christendom, as a Deist, if men were at pains to observe the exact accomplishment of prophecy; and, at the same time, consider the Jews as a monument of divine vengeance, and a most striking and visible evidence of the truth of Christianity.

“ For these things, says Bishop Newton, you have the attestation of past, and the experience of present times; and you cannot well be deceived, if you will only believe your own eyes and observation. You actually see the completion of many prophecies, in the state of men and things around you; and you have the prophecies themselves recorded in books, which have been read in public assemblies these 1700, or 2000 years; which have been dispersed, have been translated into several languages, and quoted and commented on by different authors, of different ages and nations; so that there is no room to suspect so much as a possibility of forgery or illusion.

The prophecies too, though written by different men, in different ages, have yet a visible connection and dependency, an entire harmony and agreement, one with another. At the same time that there is such perfect harmony, there is also great variety; and the same things are foretold by different prophets, in a different manner, and with different circumstances, and the latter usually improve upon the former. They are all excel-

lent in their different kinds ; and you may observe the beauty and sublimity of stile and diction of the prophets, even from those quotations which have been made from their writings. Indeed they are very well worthy of our serious perusal, and meditation, not only considered as prophets, but considered, even as authors, for their noble images and descriptions, their, bold tropes and figures, their instructive precepts, their pathetical exhortations, and excellencies ; which would have been admired in any ancient writers whatever.

Obscurities indeed there are in the prophetic writings, for which many good reasons may be assigned ; and this particularly, because prophecies are the only species of writing, which is designed more for the instruction of future ages, than of the times wherein they are written.

If the prophecies had been delivered in plainer terms, some persons might be for hastening their accomplishment, as others might attempt to defeat it ; men's actions would not appear so free, nor God's providence so conspicuous in their completion. But though some parts are obscure enough to exercise the church, yet others are sufficiently clear to illuminate it ; and the obscure parts, the more they are fulfilled, the better they are understood. In this respect, as the world groweth older, it groweth wiser. Time, that detracts something from the evidence of other writers, is still adding something to the credit and authority of the prophets. Future ages will comprehend more than the present, as the present understands more than the past : and the perfect accomplishment will produce a perfect knowledge of all the prophecies.

In any explication of the prophecies, you cannot but observe the subserviency of human learning to the study of divinity. One thing is particularly

cularly requisite, a competent knowledge of history, sacred and profane, ancient and modern. Prophecy is, as I may say, history anticipated and contracted; history is prophecy accomplished and dilated: and the prophecies of scripture, as you see, contain the fate of the most considerable nations, and the substance of the most memorable transactions in the world, from the earliest, to the latest times. Daniel, and St John, with regard to these latter times, are more copious and particular than the other prophets. They exhibit a series and succession of the most important events, from the first of the four great monarchies, or empires, to the consummation of all things. Their prophecies may really be said to be a summary of the history of the world, and the history of the world is the best comment upon their prophecies. I must confess, it was my application to history that first struck me, without thinking of it, with the amazing justness of the scripture-prophecies. I observed the predictions all along to be verified in the course of events: and the more you know of ancient and modern times, and the farther you search into the truth of history, the more you will be satisfied of the truth of prophecy. They are only pretenders to learning, and knowledge, who are patrons of infidelity. Two of the greatest men whom this country, or perhaps the whole world, hath produced, the Lord Bacon, and Sir Isaac Newton, the one wishing for a history of the several prophecies of scripture, compared with the events; the other writing observations upon the prophecies of Daniel, and the Apocalypse of St John: the testimony of two such, (not to mention others), is enough to weigh down the authority of all the Infidels who ever lived.

You see what standing monuments the Jews are every where of divine vengeance, for their infidelity;

infidelity; and beware therefore of the like crime, lest the like punishment should follow; "for (Rom. xii. 21.) if God spared not the natural branches, take heed, lest he also spare not thee." Our infidelity would be worse than even that of the Jews; for they receive and own the prophecies, but do not see and acknowledge their completion in Jesus: whereas our modern Infidels reject both the prophecy and the completion together. But what strange dissingenuity must it be, when there is all the evidence that history can afford, and, in many cases, even ocular demonstration for the completion, to be still obstinate and unbelieving. May we not very properly bestow upon such persons, that just reproach of our Saviour, Luke xxiv. 25. "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!"

Indeed, if it was once or twice only that the thing had succeeded, and the event had fallen out agreeably to the prediction, we should not so much wonder; we should not lay so much stress upon it; it might be ascribed to a lucky contingency, or owing to rational conjecture; but that so many things, so very unlikely ever to happen, should be so particularly foretold, and so many ages afterwards so punctually fulfilled; transcends, without doubt, all the skill, and power of man; and must be resolved into the omniscience and omnipotence of God. Nothing, certainly, can be a stronger proof of a person's acting by divine commission, and speaking by divine inspiration; and it is assigned in scripture, as the test and criterion, between a true and false prophet, Deut. xviii. 22. "When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously": and in Jer. xxviii. 9. "The prophet

prophet who prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall have come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord hath truly sent him." It is so much the peculiar prerogative of God, or of those who are commissioned by him, certainly to foretel future events, that it is made a challenge to all the false gods, Is. xli. 21. 28. "Produce your cause, saith the Lord: bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob; shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods." Lying oracles have been in the world; but all the wit, and malice of men and devils, cannot produce any such prophecies as are recorded in scripture: and what greater, or stronger attestations can you require to the truth and divinity of the doctrine? No man can bring with him more authentic credentials of his coming from God: and the more you shall consider, and understand them, the more you will be convinced, that, Rev. xix. 10. the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

If, to the prophecies, you add the miracles, so salutary and beneficial, so publicly wrought, and so credibly attested, above any other matters of fact whatever, by those who were eye-witnesses of them, and sealed the truth of their testimony with their blood; if, to these external confirmations, you add likewise the internal excellence of Christianity; the goodness of the doctrine itself, so moral, so perfect, so divine; and the purity and perfection of its motives, and sanctions, above any other system of morality, or religion, in the world; if you seriously consider, and compare all these things together, it is, almost, impossible not to feel conviction, and to cry out, as Thomas did, after handling our Saviour, "My Lord and my God," John xx. 28. This is only one argument out of many, that there must be a divine revelation; if there is any truth in prophecy, as we have

have shewn, in several instances, and might shew in several more, if there is any dependence upon the testimony of others, or upon our own senses; upon what we read in books, or upon what we see in the world.

Men are sometimes apt to think, that, if they could but see a miracle wrought in favour of religion, they would readily resign all their scruples, believe without doubt, and obey without reserve. The very thing that you desire, you have. You have the most striking of miracles in the series of scripture-prophecies accomplished; accomplished, as we see, in the present state of almost all nations, the Africans, the Egyptians, the Arabians, the Turks, the Jews, the Papists, the Protestants, Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, the seven churches of Asia, Jerusalem, and Rome. And this is not a transient miracle, ceasing almost as soon as performed; but is permanent, and protracted through the course of many generations. It is not a miracle delivered only upon the report of others; but is subject to our own inspection and examination. It is not exhibited before a certain number of witnesses, but is open to the observation and contemplation of all mankind; and, after so many ages, is still growing, still improving to future ages. What stronger miracle, therefore, can we require for our conviction; or what will avail, if this shall be found ineffectual? Alas! if you reject the evidence of prophecy, neither would you be persuaded, though one should rise from the dead. What can be plainer? you see, or may see with your own eyes, the scripture-prophecies accomplished: and if the scripture-prophecies are accomplished, the scripture must be the word of God; and if the scripture is the word of God, the Christian religion must be true.

It is hoped therefore, that the same address

may be applied to you, which St Paul made to king Agrippa, Acts xxvi. 27. 28. "Believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest": and God dispose your heart to answer again, "Not only almost, but altogether thou persuadest me to be a Christian;" for your encouragement, remember, that he who receiveth a prophet, in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward, Matth. x. 41. "Wherefore quench not the spirit; despise not prophesyings; prove all things; hold fast that which is good. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen."

Thus concludes the worthy Bishop, and here we should have likewise concluded. But we are apprehensive, and not without reason, that we will be charged with plagiarism, in the whole of this Appendix. We flatter ourselves, however, that the candid reader will be satisfied with the apology we are about to make.

As Bishop Newton is among the latest writers upon this important subject, and as he had both abilities, leisure, and every other advantage which we want, to consult all the authors who wrote before him, and to digest and contract them properly within a small compass; we were very sensible, that though we should have been at the utmost pains, in consulting all the authors he has done, it would not have been in our power, (considering our tender constitution, and the many toils we are exposed to), to have done it with that perspicuity, elegance, and precision, which he has done: and though we have differed in our sentiments from him, in various parts of our essay, yet we highly approve of his conclusion, and most of his recapitulation; and ardently wish, that the whole performance (however it may be ridiculed by many) may tend to the glory of God, the advancement of the Protestant

testant religion, the opening the eyes of deluded Papists, and removing the prejudices and infidelity of the Jews. If all, or any of these are obtained by it, we can say, in sincerity, our sole aim is accomplished.

F I N I S.

